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ABSTRACT

This book explains how counselors can integrate the theories of solution focused and Adlerian counseling into a comprehensive developmental counseling curriculum. Following an introduction in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 explains how support needs to be developed among the staff to implement a comprehensive school program. The comprehensive developmental counseling curriculum is described in Chapter 3. A conflict resolution focused program is presented in Chapter 4. In Chapter 5, individual planning is explained as a way to guide the personal; social; educational; and career goals of students. Responsive services are described in Chapter 6 as a way to offer immediate response to students in crisis. Group counseling, another direct responsive services, is discussed in Chapter 7. Chapter 8 covers indirect solution focused Adlerian services such as consultation. Chapter 9 describes the supportive services that are needed to implement a comprehensive developmental counseling program. Following each chapter are examples of forms for assessment. (Contains 6 figures, 3 tables, and 87 references.) (JDM)

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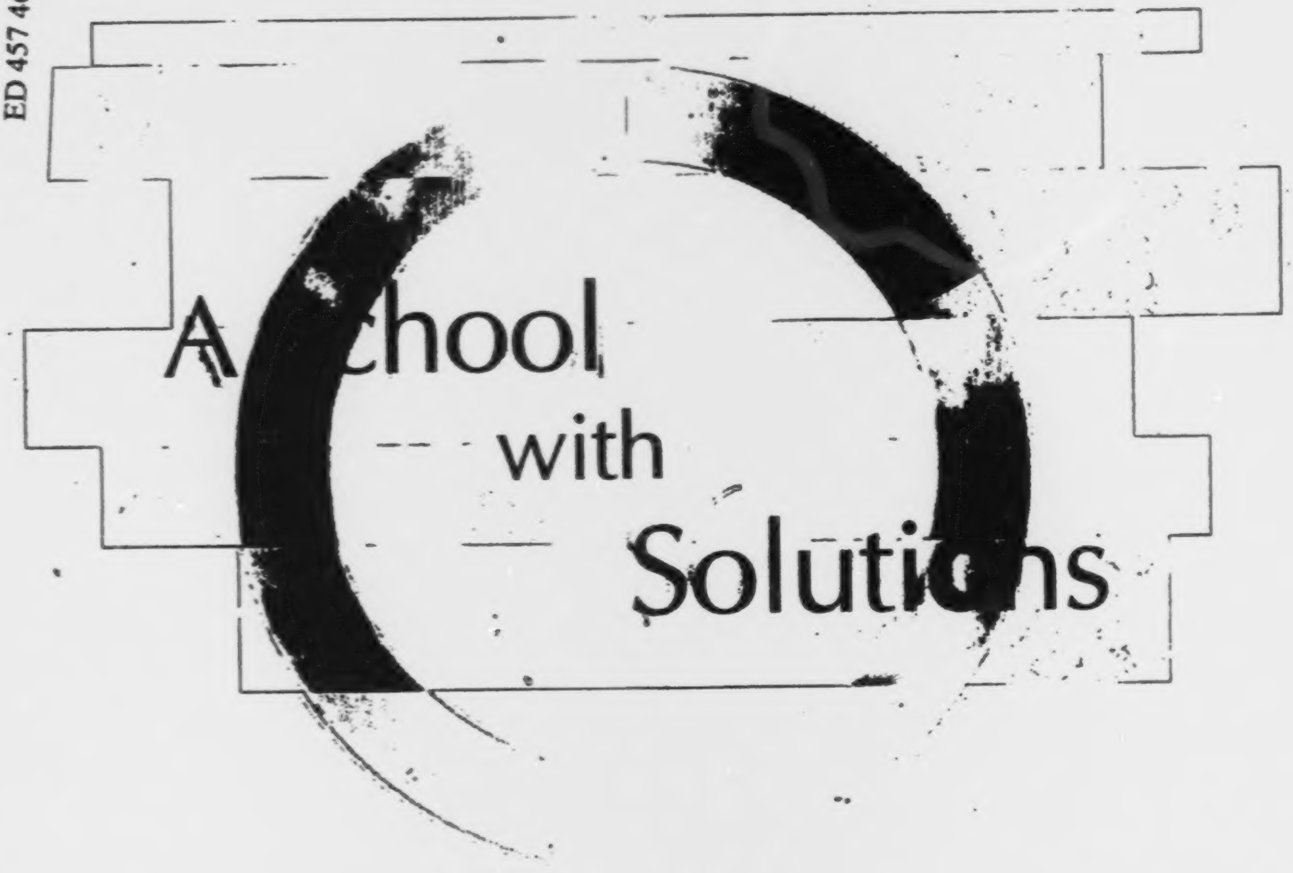

# A School with Solutions

## IMPLEMENTING A SOLUTION-FOCUSED/ ADLERIAN-BASED COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM

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# A School with Solutions

## IMPLEMENTING A SOLUTION-FOCUSED/ ADLERIAN-BASED COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM

ASCA AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION

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## Dedication

To my parents, Erika and Daniel Garner, my husband, Grafton Eliason, and my friend, Teresa Jaeschke for their encouragement and enthusiasm.

Nadine Garner

To my family members, Terry, Mike, and Liz, for their patience and understanding.

Rebecca LaFountain

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## Preface

Throughout this book you will find pages referred to as "Notebooks." These "Notebooks" are concise summaries of a particular concept or exercise in the chapter, highlighting the main points in a visually appealing way. They will assist counselors as a quick reference for immediate use during a meeting or activity. Like a lesson plan, counselors will be able to glance at them quickly and know what the steps of action are and what materials are needed. For a sample of a "Notebook," see the Personality Priorities on page 28 of Chapter Two. "Notebooks" are easy to identify by their bold headings.

| Solution-focused counseling | Adlerian counseling |
|---|---|
| avoidance of absolutes | cooperation |
| avoidance of labels | courage |
| beliefs | egalitarian relationship |
| exceptions | encouragement |
| goal-oriented | goals |
| language-based | social interest |
| solution-oriented talk | socio-cultural context |
| solutions | systemic approach |

## CHAPTER 1

# A Solution-Focused/Adlerian Approach

*On a hot mid-August day Kathy headed out to her school where she planned to get some things ready for the new year. Next to her on the front seat she tossed the hefty tote bag in which she had stuffed counseling related materials she had come across all summer. As she rounded a corner near her school, the bag shifted forward and the contents spilled out. In her downward glance she recognized the training manual from the consulting workshop she attended in June. At that instant she said to herself, "I have to try to do more consulting this year."*

*On the other hand, her colleague, Brenda, had put a lot of thought into how she would increase consulting in the new school year. Although the training had emphasized its importance, the thought of consulting—particularly with some teachers—intimidated her. She realized that she needed to face this challenge as she had successfully confronted other obstacles before—and that was to take one baby step at a time. In order to gain some confidence, she would start out with those teachers with whom she had built a good rapport. Back in college when she worked for the newspaper, she got over her fear of interviewing people by "just doing it." The more she did it, the more at ease she became. So Brenda told herself that every day she would consult with at least one teacher.*

## Solution-Focused Counseling

There is little doubt that at the end of the academic year, Brenda will feel satisfied in the progress she is making to increase consulting. Kathy will more than likely still be looking for that golden opportunity to get started. The most significant contrast in the way the two women approach their goal is in how they express it. Brenda's decision to consult with one teacher a day conveys a strong plan of action while Kathy's well-meaning intentions keep her spinning her wheels. Brenda, unbeknownst to her, is using solution-focused strategies.

Solution-focused theory is based on the work of Milton Erickson who used hypnotic trances in his work. Erickson discovered that while his clients are in trances they are able to invent solutions to their difficulties which they do not seem to do so readily in their normal state. Although we do not encourage school counselors to hypnotize their students—parents and school boards would not find it amusing—we do encourage counselors to pay close attention to the language they and their students use. The solution-focused approach is largely language based and as Steven de Shazer (1985) discovered, counselors can help their counselees construct their own successful solutions by asking them the right questions. Successful solutions, such as Brenda's, are positive and based on effective strategies (or keys) that the person has used in the past. Unfortunately when most people try to improve things, they end up exaggerating what is not working for them—in other words, they do more of the same. An example of this is a teacher who yells at the class to be quiet, and when the class does not respond, the teacher continues to yell louder. In that case, a solution-focused strategy would be to do something different. If the teacher started whispering (which would be a 180 degree difference) the class might quiet down in order to hear what is going on.

If Brenda approached her anxieties about consultation with the assumption of many of the traditional therapies—that there are deep, underlying causes to problems and that presenting complaints are seen as symptoms—she may have chosen to first deal with her fears (Huber & Backlund, 1991). But apparently she shares the belief of solution-focused counselors that, "It is much easier to act your way to a feeling than to feel your way to a new action" (Walter & Peller, 1992, p. 78).

Many school counselors share the frustration that although some counselor education programs are beginning to offer courses in brief therapy, many counselors have only been trained in traditional therapies. The time constraints found in the school setting do not allow for implementation of traditional therapies. In the book, The Twenty Minute Counselor, which is based on solution-focused counseling, Huber and Backlund (1991) share what school counselors have known for years—that therapeutic interventions can take place outside of the four walls of the counseling office. Many school counselors make significant interventions with students in the hallway, in the cafeteria, and on the playground. The "50 minute hour" is not always reasonable in a school setting. Solution-focused counseling is emerging in the literature as a viable approach for school counselors (Bonnington, 1993; Downing & Harrison, 1992; LaFountain, Garner, & Eliason, 1996; Littrell et al., 1992; Littrell, Malia, & Vanderwood, 1995).

## Adlerian Counseling

One traditional theory, which is still timely for school counselors, is Alfred Adler's Individual Psychology, or Adlerian Theory. Adler was well ahead of his time, when, in the early 1900's he spoke about such contemporary educational issues as: critical thinking, interdisciplinary studies, and school reform. The following quotes are from Adler's (1931/1992) book, What Life Could Mean to You.

- Regarding critical thinking Adler said, "The question is often raised as to whether it is better to teach children to absorb facts or to teach them to think for themselves. It seems to me that this need not be an either/or issue: the two approaches can be combined" (p. 140).
- In reference to interdisciplinary studies Adler stated, "Some subjects can be easily taught together, and many teachers are expert at linking one aspect of life with another" (p. 140).
- Adler spoke of school reform when he said: "Whether we know it or not, everyone who proposes school reform is seeking a way to increase the degree of cooperation in social life...On the whole, however, the aims and techniques of education are not yet thoroughly understood. We must find teachers who can train children not only to earn their living but also in ways beneficial to mankind." (p. 136).

Counselors who use such programs as Developing Understanding of Self and Others (DUSO; Dinkmeyer & Dinkmeyer, 1982); Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (Dinkmeyer, McKay, & Dinkmeyer, 1997); Cooperative Discipline, (Albert, 1996); Positive Discipline in the Classroom (Nelsen, Lott, & Glenn, 1997) and Active Parenting Today (Popkin, 1992) are already implementing the Adlerian philosophy. Adler's work then serves as a valuable resource as counselors seek out solutions today, although acknowledgment of this theoretical position is seldom noted.

### *Sociocultural Context*

Additionally, Adler stressed interconnectedness through cooperation, contribution, and social interest, which greatly contrasts much of the contemporary emphasis on "what's in it for me?" and "if it feels good, do it." Because of the importance Adler placed on being interdependent, Capuzzi and Gross (1995) propose that among counseling theories, Individual Psychology holds the greatest promise for addressing cultural issues. They point to Adler's emphasis on the importance of world views, family, sociocultural systems, equality, cooperation, social interest, and the importance placed of culture. The theory focuses on the person in a familial and sociocultural context. The significance of the role of the family and culture supports the value system of many minority groups

(Sherman & Dinkmeyer, 1987). Adler's emphasis on holism and the interaction between individuals and their social context places him as an ancestral figure to multicultural approaches (Nicoll, 1989). With the rapid cultural changes in the United States, the make up of schools will be different by the turn of the twenty-first century. According to Cross, Barzon, Dennis and Isaacs (1989), "By the year 2000, those now called minorities will outnumber what is now the majority in some states. It is estimated that people of color will make up 40 percent of the population in the service delivery system" (p. 4). School counselors need to work from a broad philosophical viewpoint that allows them to be respectful of differing cultures.

## An Integration of Solution-Focused and Adlerian Counseling

The approaches presented in this book are an integration of de Shazer's solution-focused counseling model and Adler's theory of counseling, combining to create a positive theory for change. The two views share many constructs such as: being positive in nature, holding a belief in the individual's capacity to create change, building on a person's strengths, and being goal-oriented.

## Goal Setting and Social Interest

An example of how the two approaches can be merged is in the process of goal setting. Solution-focused counselors help individuals attain their goals by teaching them to follow specific prescribed steps (which will be described later) in goal setting. Adlerian counselors offer individuals a more general prescription for goal attainment—the inclusion of social interest in goal setting. Dinkmeyer, Dinkmeyer, and Sperry (1987) discuss goal setting and social interest in the following:

> Adlerian Psychology sees people as social beings who cooperate with others to realize their goals and function fully. Thus Adlerians believe that mental health can be measured in terms of one's social interest, the willingness to participate in the give and take of life and to cooperate with others and be concerned about their welfare. A typical Adlerian suggestion for people who are discouraged is to become involved in helping others and to look outward instead of inward. Social interest and concern for others are contrasted with self-interest and concern only for one's own good. (p. 64)

This concept of community and cooperation in striving for goals is a significant aspect that separates Adlerian counseling from solution-focused counseling. However the general ingredient of social interest can be combined with the specific factors required for solution-focused goal setting for successful goal attainment. In a study that we (LaFountain & Garner, 1996) conducted involving 177 students who set goals in solution-focused groups, a pattern emerged. There seemed to be a relationship between the existence of social interest in the chosen solution and the level of goal attainment. In the analysis, as presented in LaFountain (1996), those students who had goals that were of social interest attained their goals at a statistically significant higher degree ($U=234.5$, $p=.0000$) than those students who had goals that were not of social interest, but rather self-serving. An example of a solution with elements of social interest is one in which a student wanted to improve her relationship with her mother by spending more time with her and talking with her. In another group, a student had a similar goal of wanting to improve her relationship with her mother. However, her solution did not promote social interest. She chose to stay away from her mother as much as possible in order to avoid arguments.

While much of solution-focused theory has contributed useful techniques that can be applied to individuals and families, Adlerian theory also considers the greater context in which the counselee is a part. This is an important aspect for school counselors when considering such components as the student's family, friends, classroom and school.

## Comprehensive Developmental School Counseling Program

One difficulty school counselors face today is the challenge to their positions. In many pockets of the United States, the value of school counselor positions is being questioned, resulting in their replacement by paraprofessionals or contracted employees. One means of making this trend more difficult is for school counselors to redefine their positions. Instead of being identified as an itinerant position or a position that supports students' learning, counselors need to be seen as more indispensable as their position is integral to the learning process (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994).

This redefinition can be accomplished by emphasizing a "program" approach as opposed to a "position" approach. Most counselors have been trained in the "position" approach, which stresses the roles of counseling, consulting, and coordinating. When counselors compartmentalize themselves in these functions, it is easy for administrators to outsource these activities. Across the country many school districts are contracting with mental health counselors to come into their schools and provide services such as group and individual counseling. Apparently some administrators believe the adage that "an expert is someone who comes from at least fifty miles away" since many administrators are hiring consultants to handle many of the difficulties counselors have been trained to handle. Although it is recognized that there are times when these external professionals are helpful, it is much more difficult for an administrator to readily replace the functions of counselors who are program driven. For example, consider Tom, an elementary counselor:

> *Tom has been working with a fourth grade teacher on classroom strategies that will lessen the conflict among a small group of children. One student, Dale, has been identified as bullying some of the other children. Tom, who regularly roams the cafeteria at lunchtime to casually greet children, often runs into the teacher there. She quite consistently reports that Dale is making progress. Tom is able to observe it for himself as he walks by Dale's table. In addition he has noticed some changes while conducting classroom guidance lessons. He is also encouraged that Dale's mother has signed up for the parenting class he is offering next grading period.*

Judy, as well, exemplifies a counselor who is program driven:

> *Judy was instrumental in setting up her district's school counseling advisory committee. In so doing she engaged some influential community citizens to serve on the committees. One such volunteer, Henry, was the vice-president of a local candy manufacturer, a major economic force in the community. Henry had insightful input into what employers looked for in high school graduates, which the committee utilized in revising the career counseling curriculum for the high school. Judy introduced Henry to the assistant superintendent who oversees curriculum. The assistant superintendent later invited him to serve on a curriculum committee when the business and vocational-technical curriculum was revised. Eventually, a partnership was established between the school district and the candy company in which the factory served as a site for internships and co-op placements, and the school welcomed employees from the factory as guest speakers in the classes. In addition, due to a lack of parent participation in evening programs at the school (on topics such as financial aid, and parenting) the school counselors were allowed to make presentations to the workers during their lunch hour.*

An administrator would be hard-pressed to contract with an external professional who could provide such integrated services as the program driven counselors described above!

Gysbers and Henderson (1994) as well as others (e.g., Myrick, 1987; Paisley & Hubbard, 1994; Perry & Schwallie-Giddis, 1993) have established the need for counseling programs in the schools that move away from "crisis-oriented service to a comprehensive program firmly grounded in principles of human growth and development" (Gysbers & Henderson, p. viii). This book helps school counselors develop approaches for implementing such a program through the use of time-effective brief therapy approaches (in which few counselors have been trained through their traditional counselor education programs). This book is organized around the program components of the Missouri Model described by Gysbers and Henderson. Others who share in a comprehensive developmental philosophy organized around another structure should have little difficulty applying the strategies discussed herein to their structure. Gysbers and Henderson have identified the following program components:

A Counseling Curriculum is designed to be a structured program in which all students participate in sequential, developmental activities. School counselors themselves, or in collaboration with teachers, conduct activities within classrooms and in large and small groups.

Individual Planning provides all students with counseling activities to guide them in developing and implementing their personal-social, educational, and career goals on a continual and systematic basis.

Responsive Services respond to the direct and immediate concerns of students and others. These concerns are issues that impede student social, personal, career or educational development.

System Support consists of a variety of support services that are necessary in order for the other guidance processes to be effective. Generally, they are activities that support research and development, program management and operations, community outreach, and professional development.

Although the components of a comprehensive developmental counseling program serve as the structure, the philosophy of the program undergirds it. This book shows counselors how they can understand and approach just about any difficulty presented to them in a methodical, less time-consuming way, thus creating services that are systematic (as opposed to fragmented). In any of the following examples, counselors could confront the situation following a solution-focused/Adlerian approach: A father calls the counselor because he feels he is losing control of his middle schooler; a teacher requests that the counselor do a classroom guidance unit on respecting others; a student asks for help making friends; the counselor participates on a committee to revise the social studies curriculum; the counselor is supervising a counselor intern who is having difficulty confronting students when appropriate.

Phil is an example of a school counselor working within a comprehensive developmental framework:

> *As Phil looks over his schedule for the day he is amazed at the number of hats he wears. Any minute now the parent with whom he is scheduled to meet should be showing up. He will attend a team meeting first period and then spend most of the morning distributing high school scheduling information through eighth grade English classes. After lunch he has a counseling group and several individual sessions with students. He has also arranged to get together with the principal to discuss the budget for next year's conflict resolution program. Undoubtedly several students will drop in, and he'll have a number of phone calls to return.*

## A Blueprint for Change

### Program Perspective vs. Position Perspective

Solution-focused counselors who approach each day from a "program" perspective that emphasizes a counseling curriculum, individual planning, responsive services and system support (as opposed to a "position" perspective that emphasizes counseling, consulting, coordinating) see themselves integrating all of these roles as they carry out their comprehensive developmental counseling curriculum. As they move throughout their day they help co-create situations that promote change. Walter and Peller (1992) describe the solution-focused approach as a model for thinking about how people change, for conversing with clients, and for constructing solutions interactively. The model has wide application (including activities such as individual counseling, group counseling, consultation, and conferring) and serves as a blueprint for change. When faced with new difficulties, a solution-focused counselor needs only to follow the blueprint to bring about change. The blueprint involves using solution-oriented talk, listening for beliefs, avoiding labels and absolutes, and looking for exceptions in order to develop successful solutions.

### Solution-Oriented Talk vs. Problem-Oriented Talk

Solution-focused counselors facilitate change by using solution-oriented talk as opposed to language that is problem-oriented. When a student comes in for individual counseling, for example, the solution-focused counselor will ask, "What is it you would like to change?" If a mother were to express frustration over her child's failure to do homework, the counselor can likewise ask, "What is it you would like to change or do differently?" The counselor will ultimately help the mother to change (although the "complainant" is often looking for the other person to change) with the expectation that a change in the mother's behavior will effect change in the child. The counselor's job is to help the complainant find a different solution to the difficulty. More than likely, since the attempted solution has not been working, the individual needs to do something different.

In this example, the mother finds herself repeatedly getting into arguments with her middle school-age daughter over the little-to-no homework the daughter brings home. Although the daughter continually insists that she has her school work under control, the mother's suspicions are confirmed at report card time. Although the ultimate goal is to help the girl work up to her academic potential, the school counselor will work with the mother to make some changes to effect change in the daughter. The solution-focused counselor knows that the most effective way to encourage change in the complainant is to understand his or her beliefs about the situation. Open-ended questions, such as "What is it you would like to change or do differently?" are designed to evoke thoughts about the complainant's beliefs about change (as opposed to complaints). The focus is on solutions rather than problems and feelings. Although this approach does not discount feelings, the emphasis is on beliefs. This approach acknowledges that, "Any change in individuals' attempted solutions will change their beliefs about their difficulties, and any changes in their beliefs about their difficulties will alter the manner in which they resolve them" (Huber & Backlund, 1991, p. 29).

### Beliefs

Individuals present their beliefs about their situations by the language they use. Although solution-focused counselors do not emphasize the reflection and clarification of feelings—the basic skills to which all counselors are introduced—counselors must rely on these active listening skills as they listen to the beliefs that the other person is presenting. In this model the counselor listens to the language the individual uses since words describe the beliefs.

## Avoiding Labels and Absolutes

It is important for counselors to listen for the labels and absolutes that people use when they are telling their story. The mother in this example calls herself a "doormat" for allowing her daughter to "always walk all over her." Through further dialogue the counselor learns that the mother is struggling with the amount of responsibility the daughter should assume now that she is in middle school. Last year when the daughter began resenting nightly homework checks the mother told her they could drop them once she was in middle school. The mother sees that her daughter is still not ready to handle her homework responsibilities on her own. Since the counselor recognizes the mother's perceived helplessness in her use of "doormat," the counselor helps the mother re-label herself as a "welcome mat" who at times "gives her daughter an open invitation to do what ever she wants." This image is one that gives the mother more control since she can choose to "roll up" the welcome mat in the event the daughter is not being responsible.

When we do trainings we usually do an exercise where counselors brainstorm absolutes and labels that they hear in a school setting. Then we have the counselors reframe the language by replacing the absolutes with qualifiers and relabeling the labels so as to open up more possibilities for change. A partial list is given below with examples where absolutes and labels have been reframed.

To further illustrate the use of absolutes and labels, consider the young man who says, "I'm always depressed." The counselor can respond by saying, "At times you feel discouraged." This response opens up more possibilities for change because someone who is discouraged can be encouraged. (A discussion on encouragement, which is a basic Adlerian approach, follows.) In many cases labels are stated in the form of an adjective. A helpful way to re-label this type is to substitute the adjective with a verb in order to create the possibility of movement. For example, if a girl calls herself an overeater, it sounds as if she is pigeon-holed into that category and has no hope for change. When the counselor responds by saying, "At times you eat too much" that opens the possibility that at other times the girl eats normally or can set a goal toward eating normally. Those times when the girl does eat normally would be an exception to her belief that she is an overeater.

## Exceptions

In the example concerning the middle schooler above, the mother and the daughter can discuss exceptions, times when the mother gives the daughter appropriate direction. In this case the mother reports,

| Absolute | Reframe | Label | Reframe |
|---|---|---|---|
| always | sometimes | depressed | discouraged |
| can't | won't | overeater | eat too much at times |
| everyone | some people | hyper | overly active at times |
| never | sometimes | bookworm | study a lot |

*Table 01-01.*

"My daughter would like to keep her room anyway she likes. It looks like a disaster zone much of the time—which drives me crazy. The agreement we've made is that she can let it get out of hand if she wants, but she must clean it once a week—on Saturday—before she's allowed to do anything with her friends or talk to them on the phone. When she has plans, it really motivates her to get her room cleaned without me nagging her." The counselor helps the mother discover that she has found an effective solution to deal with the messy room that might work with homework. The mother decides, that at least for the time being, her daughter will need to show her homework before she will be allowed to talk on the phone or socialize.

No matter if the counselor is working with students, individually or in group, or with parents, teachers, administrators, or community leaders, solution-focused counselors can use this single blueprint.

## An Egalitarian Relationship

While the techniques such as listening for beliefs and exceptions come from solution-focused theory, the emphasis on co-creating a solution is shared by both solution-focused and Adlerian theories. Adlerians, in particular, believe that individuals are self-determining and creative. In Adlerian counseling the counselor and the counselee (student, parent or teacher), have an egalitarian relationship. Sometimes the word egalitarian is misunderstood to mean equal. What it means is a relationship of mutual trust and respect in which there are no superiors or inferiors. "By working in the context of a collaborative effort directed at creating psychological movement, counselees feel responsible for their own lives" (Dinkmeyer et al., 1987, p. 85).

## Courage and Encouragement

Encouragement is a trusting and respectful process to help others develop the courage to risk and make changes. According to Dinkmeyer et al. (1987): "Encouragement is considered the most important technique for promoting change. Most interpersonal problems are the result of discouragement. Encouragement is the process of building an individual's self-esteem, enabling him to cooperate with other members of the family" (p. 242).

## Systemic Approach

In the example above, both the counselor and the mother worked together collaboratively. Although the process unfolded between the two individuals who were together, it is evident that the counselor has a sense of the family system and encourages the mother to acknowledge how a change in herself could effect change in the daughter. Solution-focused counseling is used widely in marriage and family counseling, and its systemic application can be generalized to school counseling. Most counselors are traditionally trained in models of linear cause and effect, whereas a systemic approach considers cause and effect as circular, simultaneous, and reciprocal (Carlson, Sperry, & Lewis, 1997). While traditional theories espousing a linear approach focus on the individual in understanding the individual's behavior, theories from a systemic approach look at the system in which the individual is a part in order to gain insight into the individual's behavior. Even if school counselors never see families in their offices, a systemic perspective is beneficial in helping students understand themselves in the systems in which they interact each day.

It is from the work of Adler and his followers that most of the systemic therapies find their roots (Sherman & Dinkmeyer, 1987); however, "formal acknowledgment of this theoretical position has seldom been noted" (Sperry & Carlson, 1991, p. 94). Adler had a pioneering role in systems approach as he emphasized the importance of examining individuals within their social context and regarded the family as the primary one. He recognized that it is within the family that individuals learn to belong and interact (Carlson et al., 1997). Acknowledging that parents and children alike need to be worked with when children experience difficulties, Adler established child guidance clinics early in the twentieth century. In addition, he understood the important contributions that parents could make when their children experienced difficulties in the schools. As a result he instituted Advisory Councils in the schools for the purpose of bringing together teachers and parents in the presence of a psychologist. He found that the parents were most often helpful as well as grateful for the opportunity for consultation and the resulting solutions. These Advisory Councils flourished throughout Europe (Adler, 1931/1992).

We recognize the courage it takes for school counselors to seek out new ways for dealing with the difficulties emerging in schools today. This book shows counselors how they can understand and approach many of the concerns that they face in a school setting in a systematic and time-effective manner.

Since a systemic counseling program extends far beyond the walls of the counseling office (to the classroom, the cafeteria, the playground, the principal's office), it is helpful if all staff members are included. This book offers a blueprint for all school staff members to approach difficulties with solutions in mind. It will provide examples of how teachers, principals, playground assistants and other staff members can use techniques of solution-focused/Adlerian theories such as purposeful questioning, looking for exceptions, and building on strengths (to be described later) in their interactions with children. The methods are applicable as well with parents and teachers in such interactions as conferences and team meetings. School staff members who share this philosophy of change can offer programs that are positive in nature, use encouragement, and emphasize cooperation. They can be instrumental in helping students to generate possibilities to difficulties, thus emphasizing their facility to co-create solutions.

While this book is replete with ways the entire staff can use these techniques to effect change, a clear distinction is made as to how counselors use these approaches in counseling. We define counseling as a process of self-understanding and re-education and recognize that counseling skills are learned through formal masters level education and supervision.

We recognize that not all staff members in a school may readily adopt a common philosophy. Just as solution-focused counselors know they will be most effective if they start with where the counselee is already doing well, counselors will be more successful if they identify programs in their schools that already tend to have solution-focused/Adlerian characteristics and build from there. For instance, when we have conducted trainings, many counselors have been able to identify isolated components of their programs, such as Instructional Support Teams, as compatible with this philosophy. The goal-oriented process of the Instructional Support Teams remind them of the solution-focused approach.

Counselors will learn how to extend the model to all school staff members so together everyone can approach difficulties with solutions in mind. The book is a prescription for creating "A School with Solutions."

## Conclusion

This book presents how counselors can integrate the theories of solution-focused and Adlerian counseling into a comprehensive developmental counseling curriculum. Solution-focused counseling is an optimistic, language-based approach which helps individuals build on the strengths, or solutions, that they already possess.

Solution-focused counselors facilitate change through solution-oriented talk that focuses on exceptions—times when the difficulty is not occurring. Both solution-focused counselors and Adlerian counselors work with their counselees to co-create solutions. Adlerian counselors strive for egalitarian (respectful) relationships with their counselees. Adlerian theory stresses community, cooperation, contributing, encouragement, and social interest. In addition, it focuses on the entire system in which the individual interacts.

The systemic approach, which Adler pioneered, is beneficial in helping students in the school setting. Through a comprehensive developmental counseling program, counselors working from a "program" perspective can encourage the entire staff to approach difficulties with solutions in mind.

| Solution-focused counseling | Adlerian counseling |
|---|---|
| miracle question | cooperation |
| process goals | life-style |
| scaling | personality priorities |
|  | "the question" |

## CHAPTER 2

# Creating Support and Cooperation

*Marilyn felt quite satisfied as she left the tenth grade Health class where she had team taught a unit on human sexuality with the Health teacher. It was a video-based program on responsible decision-making that the school counseling advisory committee had highly recommended. She was surprised how easily the program got approved by the school board, and she was quite certain that the advisory committee's endorsement helped.*

*Some of her colleagues had been skeptical about the formation of the advisory committee last year because they feared the counselors would lose their autonomy. But it seemed that now the administration was allowing the counseling department to do things that might have been viewed as controversial in the past. The requests, although usually initiated by a counselor, were being made on behalf of the advisory committee instead of appearing to reflect the desires of one counselor.*

According to Rye and Sparks (1991), the first step in planning a comprehensive developmental counseling program is obtaining a commitment from the counseling staff. When such a commitment is achieved, counselors should prepare a written proposal to present to the administration. The proposal should include what a comprehensive developmental program is, who is going to carry it out, how it will be implemented, tentative time frames, and the benefits of such a program. "Administrative support increases the chances of gaining full support from the school board, which in turn communicates the importance of counseling to the community" (p. 5).

Gysbers and Henderson (1994) discuss the importance of getting support from the school board and administration when setting out to establish a comprehensive developmental school curriculum. Upon reaching a consensus to change from a "position-focused" perspective to a "program-focused" one, and receiving support from the administration, counselors need to take a solution-focused approach to accomplish the work involved. A solution-focused approach advocates action in small, specific steps. The first task is for counselors to form committees, specifically the steering committee and the advisory committee.

## Steering Committee

According to Gysbers and Henderson (1994) the steering committee is the managing and decision-making body that oversees the development and implementation of the comprehensive counseling program. It outlines the necessary steps that need to be taken and assures that the necessary resources are available for the project. It also is responsible for developing a public relations plan. The committee usually consists of approximately five to eight members including, but not limited to, the superintendent (or the superintendent's representative), a school board member, a principal, a director (such as one in special education or vocational education), a parent, and perhaps a student. The director of guidance usually heads the committee. In districts that do not have such a position, any one of the counselors who are inclined to take on this role could do so.

## School Counseling Advisory Committee

The primary role of the school counseling advisory committee is to advise the counseling department on its program. It is a link between the school counseling department and the community, with its membership representing both the school and community. There are approximately ten to fifteen members on the council such as administrators, teachers, and counselors reflecting the various school levels; community leaders from business, the clergy, and mental health; and parents. Some counselors report that when they deal with an adversarial parent, they find it helpful to appoint the parent to the advisory committee. The parent ends up becoming one of "us" instead of one of "them" and uses his or her energy productively. Any one of these members can hold the position of committee chair.

### *Cooperation*

Cooperation, a significant component of Adlerian counseling as described in Chapter One, is a key ingredient for the success of committee work. It is beneficial to do activities or "ice breakers" to facilitate the group in getting to know each other. Many of the same exercises that counselors use for introductions with their student groups are appropriate with little adaptation. An activity that we use in our solution-focused groups is a likeness exercise, titled "Find someone who..." Students are given a list of phrases (such as "Find someone who...likes the same season") and must circulate around the room and talk to one another until they find someone who can respond to their question the same way they would. At that point they sign each others' paper and continue to mingle until their form is complete or until time is called. An adaptation of this exercise for adults can be done by committee members (pages 26-27) to set the tone the committee will be an interactive group. When the leader brings the group back together after the exercise the leader can relate the activity to the purpose of the committee by saying, "We found out that we have many things in common with the other committee members. Another thing we all have in common is a commitment to creating this counseling program. To be most effective we will need to continue to keep lines of communication open and interact." Although the group members will represent different constituencies, hopefully they will all have a common purpose—which is similar to "common sense," a term coined by Adler to mean "the extent to which an individual's thoughts, emotions and behaviors are in line with those of his fellow men" (Beames, 1992, p. 26).

Counselors who are involved in this exercise, either as the leader or as a committee member, may want to observe group dynamics in order to assess who among the group members seeks out others and who waits to be approached. This information may be important for capitalizing on the group's productivity. It is sometimes helpful to do an assessment of group members' leadership styles to enhance the individual member's awareness of his or her own strengths as well as those of the other group members. Assessments based on instruments such as the Myers-Briggs (Myers, 1985) or the Color Code (Hartman, 1987) are commonly used for this purpose.

In a workshop, Kottman (1996) used an exercise to describe personality characteristics of parents, and the most effective way to deal with them, based on the personality priorities work of Kefir (1972, cited in Dinkmeyer et al., 1987). Since Adler did not like to categorize people, the priorities are not used for that purpose, but rather to understand core convictions. Kefir originally defined four priorities that are important to an individual's belonging: superiority, control, comfort, and pleasing. Dinkmeyer et al. (1987) consider superiority to be the most common number-one priority. Its various forms are being competent, being right, being useful, being a victim, and being a martyr. Individuals attempt to move toward superiority in order to avoid meaninglessness regardless of circumstances or others' behavior. These persons tend to be overinvolved, overresponsible, stressed, and unsure about their relationships with others. There are other persons who control (either themselves or others) in order to avoid humiliation. Persons who are controlling lack spontaneity and creativity. Other persons are comfort seekers in an effort to avoid stress. Their desire for self-gratification and their unwillingness to risk frustration and responsibility lowers their productivity. Finally, there are persons who seek to please so as not to be rejected. The pleaser often ends up frustrating others and ultimately experiences alienation.

Kottman (1996) characterized the personality types with animals, a strategy to which she credited Steve Cunningham, an Adlerian. Superiority is attributed to an eagle, controlling to a lion, comforting to a turtle, and pleasing to a chameleon. We have further adapted this exercise to help individuals understand leadership styles. A brief description follows:

1. The leader posts a placard or picture of each of the following animals around the room: an eagle, a lion, a turtle, or a chameleon (with no reference to the priorities).
2. The leader asks the group members to choose an animal by walking over to the placard that represents it. Small groups form around each animal, and in the small groups the participants discuss the leadership qualities of their animal.
3. Each group makes two lists: The first list contains the leadership characteristics of the animal (e.g., goes after what it wants, is feared by others); the second list includes suggestions to others as how to best deal with this animal (e.g., be direct, talk about things not feelings).
4. The leader brings all of the groups back together and asks them to share their lists with the entire group. The leader encourages dialogue between the groups, assists the members in seeing how each priority has both positive and negative qualities, and helps the members to process how each "type" of leader can best help the group to function.

## Strategic Planning

Hayes, Kormanski, Kormanski, and Hayes (1993) advocate the use of strategic planning in the managing of change in a school system. Strategic planning, which helps individuals think and act more decisively, is a process which has been borrowed from the business community and is being applied to the public and non-profit sectors (Bryson, 1988). Strategic planning enables the leadership to clarify process, to set direction, and to initiate the collection of data. These processes are described respectively below as: establishing a mission statement, creating a vision, and developing needs assessments and evaluations.

### *Mission Statement*

Once the advisory committee is in place, and group members have had the opportunity to get to know one another, the advisory committee needs to help establish the purpose or mission of the counseling department (based on the program-focused perspective agreed upon). While this activity has a definite outcome, the process of developing the mission statement can continue the team building.

At this point many counselors may report that they have been through the tedious process of creating a mission statement and report that they find it to be a waste of time since mission statements only get buried in reports that merely collect dust on the shelves. By taking a solution-focused approach, the mission statement writing process can come alive, and the product can become a working document.

The following mission statement activity is an adaptation of Duncan and Kindler's work (1994). The first step in establishing a mission statement is for the group members to idealize their program. The chair of the advisory committee, or another person appointed as group leader, can assist participants in this process by asking them a variation of de Shazer's (1985) miracle question: "Suppose that tonight while you are asleep there is a miracle, and the school counseling program is redesigned in a way you would like it to be. How would you know? What would the program be doing differently?" This miracle question is similar to Adler's "the question" which asks the patient what would be different in his or her life if he or she were well. "The question" is a diagnostic technique which Adler used to differentiate physical and psychological problems and to provide an indicator of the purposes of the symptoms (Beames, 1992). While solution-focused counselors tend to treat the response to the miracle question as the desired goal, Adlerian counselors understand the response to "the question" as something that the individual fears and wishes to avoid (Carr & Bitter, 1997). A counselor who integrates solution-focused and Adlerian techniques helps individuals understand that they can move toward those things they fear by examining how they have approached difficulties in the past. The solution-focused/Adlerian counselor is concerned with the process rather than the end result alone. Likewise, in this exercise some of the responses may reflect what the participants fear and wish to avoid. The astute leader will recognize and acknowledge their fears.

The leader should then use a brainstorming technique for the participants to develop the list of characteristics that their new school counseling program would have. Although some advocates of brainstorming advocate "anything goes," Duncan and Kindler (1994) suggest that the following parameters are established: the ideas should be technologically feasible, financially reasonable, and responsive to environmental changes. The way in which the question is framed—"What would the program be doing differently?"— sets the expectation for action and change. Hopefully participants will share such responses as: "Being more preventative;" "Doing more classroom guidance lessons;" and, "Establishing more links with the community." The leader lists the actions on newsprint until the ideas are exhausted. Then the leader hangs the newsprint around the room.

From the ideas generated, the group will need to choose those characteristics that best describe the school counseling program as they would like to see it by means of a group voting technique. Each participant is given three to five colored self-adhesive dots (available in office and stationery supply stores). The participants vote without talking, by placing a dot next to each of the three to five characteristics for which they wish to vote. If someone feels very strongly about one certain characteristic, then the individual can use all of the dots to vote for that one item. After everyone has voted, the top characteristics are identified and recorded. They are reviewed to determine whether or not the characteristic fits the parameters as stated above. In the review it is also important to distinguish between those characteristics that clearly represent the mission (e.g., To serve all students) and those characteristics that are more visionary (e.g., To have student-counselor ratios of 250:1). Those characteristics that are more appropriate for a vision statement can be listed separately and dealt with at a later time.

The remaining characteristics should serve as the basis for the mission statement. The entire group, or a subgroup, can work together in combining these key concepts into a draft mission statement. A systematic way to do this is to develop each key characteristic into a sentence, and then to link together the sentences into an initial mission statement. It is important that the sentences are written in the active voice rather than the passive voice. For example, "Counselors deliver proactive services" as opposed to "Proactive services are delivered by counselors." The sentences are stated in a positive presentation—what the program will do as opposed to what it will not do. "Counselors serve all students" is a positive presentation as opposed to "There are no students that counselors won't serve." The language should also be in the here and now (present) and specific. These criteria—positive presentation, here and now, and specific—are some of the criteria also used for setting solution-focused process goals (discussed later in this chapter).

After the group or subgroup develops the first draft of the mission statement, the next step is for the group members to discuss it and massage it until they arrive at a final mission statement. This process can take a number of meetings. Some individuals see this "wordsmithing" process as a tedious one and get easily frustrated. They may not care whether or not the word proactive or preventative is used. From a solution-focused view, however, the language is significant. Proactive does have a different meaning than preventative. The choice of words a person makes can tell a lot about his or her beliefs. The leader needs to continue to be aware that although the mission statement consists of characteristics that the group wants to carry out, the implementing of ideas may be challenging to some of the group members. These fears and beliefs may come through in the discussion. The leader needs to acknowledge and encourage members who express anxiety, and the leader needs to focus on the process of how the group has overcome challenges in the past and how it will face the changes that are ahead.

*Marilyn remembers one discussion that took place as they formulated their mission statement. In a statement referring to the school counselors, one individual mentioned the need to use the term "certified" school counselors. While some individuals thought that it was not necessary to include the word certified, since certification was a state requirement, others felt the addition lent a professional air to the statement. Marilyn learned a lot about other members' images of school counselors. In the end, the group decided to use the term "certified" school counselor.*

Following is an example of a mission statement:

The Monroe District's Comprehensive School Counseling Program is an integral part of the educational program. The program, which is developmental in nature, is established to assist all students in acquiring the skills necessary to become productive citizens in a pluralistic society. These skills include: the development of competencies in career planning and exploration, knowledge of self and others, self-responsibility and decision-making, and educational and vocational development. The program is systematically delivered by certified school counselors through a comprehensive curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and system support. This program is coordinated with and makes full use of school, home, and community resources.

*Figure 02-01.*

## Vision Statement

Once the mission statement is developed, a vision statement can be generated. While the mission statement says what the program is, the vision statement describes what the program strives to be. Some of the characteristics that are chosen in the voting exercise that are too idealistic to be included in the mission statement, may be good candidates for the vision statement. The example given above was "To achieve a student-counselor ratio of 250:1." Others may be: "To ensure that every student graduates;" "To ensure that each student develops a career portfolio throughout his or her school career;" or "To place every graduating senior in post-secondary education, military service, or full-time employment upon graduation."

A strategic planning exercise, adapted from one used by Kormanski (1996), can assist advisory committee members to work toward their vision. An initial step is to list each characteristic of the vision and assign a number to each component. From the items given above (an abbreviated list), the list would look like the one below:

1. To achieve a student-counselor ratio of 250:1.
2. To ensure that every student graduates.
3. To ensure that each student develops a career portfolio throughout his or her school career.
4. To develop special programs for every at-risk student.
5. To place every graduating senior in post-secondary education, military service, or full-time employment upon graduation.

The group then determines which items are more operational and which are more strategic. Operational goals are usually more narrowly focused, immediate, and easily defined while strategic goals are more comprehensive, future oriented, and general (Hayes et al., 1993). They differ also in terms of how much change has to be made in order to implement them and what cost (e.g., emotional, financial) is involved (Bryson, 1988). The next step is to use a group discussion format to determine where each item falls on the continuum from High Operational to High Strategic. This process provides members with a visual plan. The chart below is an illustration of what such a continuum would look like. As the chart shows, ensuring that each student develops a career portfolio is the most operational since the item number three is on the "somewhat operational" end of the scale. This part of the scale represents that the counselors have already begun to implement this objective to some degree. Obviously, it is not in the

**The Operational-Strategic Continuum**

| | 3 | 4 | 5 1 | 2 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| high operational | somewhat operational | mid-way | somewhat strategic | high strategic |

1. To achieve a student-counselor ratio of 250:1.
2. To ensure that every student graduates.
3. To ensure that each student develops a career portfolio throughout his or her school career.
4. To develop special programs for every at-risk student.
5. To place every graduating senior in post-secondary education, military service, or full-time employment upon graduation.

*Table 02-01.*

highly operational stage, so they will need to set process goals (as described below) to make it more operational. Although some of the items that are more strategic may seem impossible to reach, as counselors work on the items that are more operational, they will notice some effect on the strategic end. For example, while ensuring that all students graduate (number two) seems unrealistic at this time, as counselors operationalize areas of their program for which they have more control— such as putting into place programs for all at-risk students (number four)— counselors may have some effect on the strategic end of the scale.

## *Using Process Goals as a Means to the Vision*

Task groups consisting of the counseling staff and advisory members, can be assigned to each of the items on the vision statement. Those persons working on an item which is more operational in nature may more likely see results, while those assigned to more strategic areas will find themselves taking "baby steps." A systematic means of achieving these visionary items is to set process goals. A "process goal" differs from an "end goal," the type to which people normally strive. Usually when people talk about goals they are talking about the end result. Process goals, on the other hand, focus on what needs to be done in order to achieve that end result. For example, if Jack sets an end goal to lose twenty pounds between New Year's and Easter, he will measure his progress by whether or not he lost all twenty pounds by Easter. If instead he sets a process goal, he might say, "Each day I will exercise 30 minutes and limit my fat intake to 30 grams." Each day Jack can experience success in the process by exercising and watching his fat grams as he has proposed. Process goals, then, are well-defined goals based on the following criteria: (a) presented in the positive about what the individual will do, instead of what the individual will not do; (b) presented in process form about what the individual will be doing; (c) stated in the here and now; (d) stated in specific terms; (e) designed within the individual's control, and (f) stated in the individual's language (Walter & Peller, 1992).

When the task groups set their process goals, they are more likely to state their time frames in terms of weeks or months, depending on the goal. For instance, if there are three members on the task group about programs for at-risk students, they may first decide to narrow their focus to "at-risk" for failing or dropping out of school. Then each member might focus on a specific school level (elementary, middle school/junior high, or high school) and spend the first six weeks exploring any related research (such as in journals or on the Internet) for their specific level. A process goal for each of those task group members would be, "I will spend one hour per week researching literature related to at-risk students for failure or dropping out of school." After they get together and share their findings, they may set their next process goal around making arrangements to visit a model site that is actually implementing one of the exemplary programs.

It is possible that some of the task groups, particularly those built around some of the more strategic items, may choose not to set any process goals at the particular time. For instance, the task group focusing on reducing the student-to-counselor ratio may decide it is too premature to move in that direction immediately. They may fear loss of support from the top if the administration perceives the move to a comprehensive developmental school counseling program as a ploy for hiring more school counselors. Another option might be to make their process goal even more long term. The process goal for the group might read: Each time feedback is received that may later help build the case for adjusting the number of counselors (either directly or indirectly), the supporting documentation (e.g., letter, needs assessment, evaluation) will be entered into a binder held by the chair of the task group. Two such documents, the needs assessment and evaluation, are discussed below.

## Needs Assessment and Evaluation

### *Needs Assessment*

A needs assessment is a tool to help in program planning and development. Different versions should be prepared for all of the district's constituents including: students, teachers, staff, administration, parents, and community members in order to get comprehensive feedback. Although there are many suggested versions in school counseling textbooks, one tailored to the particular needs of each district will be most useful. The mission statement should serve as the basis around which questions are developed. For example, the mission statement says that the counseling program is delivered through a comprehensive curriculum. On the needs assessment, questions regarding curriculum needs should be asked in regard to such things as manner and frequency in delivering the curriculum and subject areas. The needs assessments can be structured in a variety of ways. They can be designed so that respondents answer by selecting given choices; by circling Yes, No, or Sometimes; in a Likert scale fashion; or by answering open-ended questions. Some sample questions and formats for parents of high school students, regarding the curriculum area are:

How often should students participate in classroom guidance? 1 2 3 4

1= once a week 2 = every other week 3=once a month 4=other ____________
(specify time)

Students should participate in classroom guidance once a week. Yes No

Classroom guidance should be an integral part of the curriculum. 1 2 3 4 5

1= strongly agree 2=agree 3=neutral 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

What topics should be covered in classroom guidance?

Circle the topics which you think should be a part of classroom guidance:

self-esteem / decision-making / responsibility / career planning / relationships

human sexuality / tolerance / others ______________________________
(specify topics)

## Evaluation

While the primary purpose of the needs assessment is to gather information to use in program development, the main objective of the evaluation is to measure the impact of a program after its implementation. While that is so in its purest form, many professionals use the information gathered through needs assessments as a way to evaluate their programs. Further, some professionals design their needs assessments so that they have an evaluation component built in. A typical example that shows how professionals use one tool to serve as both a needs assessment and an evaluation follows:

Please respond using the following
to rate the importance:
1=highest importance
2=very important
3=necessary
4=optional
5=not needed

Please rate the effectiveness based
on your experience:
A=excellent
B=very good
C=good
D=needs improvement
E=not observed

| | Importance | Effectiveness |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Students need to learn effective study skills. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |
| 2. Students need to develop life-long leisure interests. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |

## The Use of Scaling in Needs Assessment and Evaluation

Scaling, one technique used in solution-focused counseling, is a time-effective way for professionals to gather both program planning information as well as evaluative data from one instrument. Scaling, when used in counseling situations, is a behavioral technique which enables counselees to become less vague and more specific (Walter & Peller, 1992). For example, to the student who states that he wants to get along better with his supervisor at his part-time job and proceeds to discuss the "terrible" situation at work, the counselor can become more clear as to how "awful" his client perceives the situation by asking, "If we used a scale with one being the worst you can imagine, and ten being the ideal situation, how would you say it is right now?" If the counselee responds "two" then the counselor knows that the student perceives the situation to be pretty bad—but not as bad as it could be. The counselor could have used "averaging," a technique which forces the counselee to assess a given period of time, "If we used a scale with one being the worst you can imagine, and ten being the ideal situation, how would you say you've been averaging this week?" Scaling can be used to see how hopeful the student feels: "On a scale of one to ten where do you think things could be at work next week?" If the student would answer "four," the counselor could ask, "What do you need to do to make it a four?" In addition, scaling can be used to assess at what level the student would feel the problem was solved: "On a scale of one to ten, when would you know the problem was solved and that the work situation wasn't so terrible?"

Staff members other than counselors can use scaling as well. For example, one middle school counselor reported to us that she taught the scaling method to an English teacher. The teacher used it with a student that the counselor had briefly worked with due to "lack of motivation" in class. The student was failing to do any assigned outside readings in the novels. With the counselor the student made the following progress goal: "I will be reading from my novels 20 minutes a night Monday - Thursday." For the student a "ten" meant that she read for a full 20 minutes each of those evenings while a "one" meant she did not do it. Twice a week the teacher checked with the student using a scaling method as to how she was doing in her reading. The student averaged a "seven" which was much improved from the previous "one." Likewise a principal who spoke to a student about playground behavior, specifically keeping his cool when playing sports, could talk to the boy about gauging his behavior through scaling. When the principal sees the boy in the hall from time-to-time he can ask, "How are you doing with keeping your cool out there on the playground?"

This concept of scaling can be used in a needs assessment which also can have an evaluation component such as the following example:

Importance: On a scale of one to five, with one being of high importance and five being of no importance, show the importance of each of the following by circling the number that corresponds with your rating:

Effectiveness: On a scale of A-E, with A being excellent and E being not observed, indicate how the counseling program has been averaging on each of the following, by circling the letter that corresponds with your rating:

| | Importance | Effectiveness |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Students need to learn effective study skills. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |
| 2. Students need to develop life-long leisure interests. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |

On pages 20-23 are examples of items included in a needs assessment/evaluation based on a comprehensive developmental counseling program. While professionals may want to use these sample items as a spring board to the development of their own needs assessments/evaluations, it is important that each counseling program creates its own forms in order to closely reflect the needs of its district.

Another method of assessment/evaluation is to provide an open-ended form that allows constituents to discuss their views. In order to provide some structure, the definition of each of the four components should be given, followed by two solution-focused questions:

Counselors should continue to...

Counselors will be doing more of...

An example of the form, Assessment/Evaluation Sample #4, is found on pages 24-25.

### *Analysis of Needs Assessments and Evaluations*

Rye and Sparks (1991) suggest that the advisory committee analyze all data from the needs assessments and evaluations so that the direction of the program will be well understood. The advisory committee can call upon volunteers or students from business education classes to assist in data entry and computer analysis. After the rankings of the needs for each population are studied, the advisory committee can establish priorities.

## School Life-style

All systems develop an organizational personality or culture which is characterized by a set of rules and beliefs (Nicoll, 1996). Just as Adlerian counselors assess an individual's personality or approach to life through a life-style assessment, they can also assess the life-style of an educational system. According to Nicoll (1996) this can be done in several ways. One way is for counselors to listen to the informal sharing of stories about the school among the faculty. They should listen specifically for the themes that faculty convey. Themes of success, positive views of children, and cooperation signal a healthy school life-style, while discouragement, negativism, and adversarial relationships suggest an unhealthy school life-style. Another means of assessing the school life-style is to look at the accepted rituals and traditions within the school. A healthy school life-style is evident in rituals such as holding class meetings and combining students of varying abilities in cooperative groups. This contrasts with unhealthy rituals that foster competitive grading practices and grouping students by ability. In the next chapter, ways of promoting a healthy school life-style through the curriculum will be addressed.

## Conclusion

Creating system support is essential when developing a comprehensive school program. Establishing an atmosphere of mutual trust and cooperation enhances the likelihood of success for such a program. While the steering committee is the decision-making body that oversees the development and implementation of the program, it is the advisory committee that actually carries out the program. So that everyone has a clear idea of the purpose of the program, a mission statement is created. The vision statement, on the other hand, describes what the program strives to be. Solution-focused strategies, which advocate action in small, specific steps, are helpful in the formulation of the vision statement, needs assessment and evaluations. The advisory committee will help counselors see what they are already doing that is solution-focused in nature. These activities will serve as the basis for "A School with Solutions."

# ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION SAMPLE #1

Please take a few minutes to let the Counseling Program know how they are doing. Your responses will help them plan for future counseling services.

**I am a (circle one):** High school student
Parent
Teacher
Staff member
Administrator
Board member
Community member

Please respond by using the following scales:

**IMPORTANCE**

Please respond using the following
to rate the importance:
1=highest importance
2=very important
3=necessary
4=optional
5=not needed

**EFFECTIVENESS**

Please rate the effectiveness based
on your experience:
A=excellent
B=very good
C=good
D=needs improvement
E=not observed

## COUNSELING CURRICULUM

| | Importance | Effectiveness |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Students need to gain information about college via workshops, college fairs, visits from college representatives, and evening programs for parents. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |
| 2. Students need to gain information on human sexuality through classroom guidance lessons. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |
| 3. Students need a freshman orientation program to acquaint them with the high school. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |
| 4. Students need to learn study skills through small and large group instruction. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |
| 5. Students need to learn to manage conflicts through programs such as conflict resolution training. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |

## INDIVIDUAL PLANNING

| | Importance | Effectiveness |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Students need to become aware of their strengths and weaknesses. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2. Students need help in selecting courses. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |
| 3. Students need to gain information about post high school training and education. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |
| 4. Students need to understand their abilities, aptitudes, and interests through standardized tests. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |
| 5. Students need access to an up-to-date resource center for career exploration. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |

## RESPONSIVE SERVICES

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Students need to have counseling services available to them when their concerns impede them in their social, personal, career, or educational development. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |
| 2. Students need to understand where to seek help outside of school. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |
| 3. Students in special needs settings need coordinated services that are provided by a team of professionals. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |
| 4. Parents need to have parenting classes available to them. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |
| 5. Teachers need to have opportunities to consult with the counselor in regards to handling classroom difficulties. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |

## SYSTEM SUPPORT

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. The counseling program needs a school counseling advisory committee that provides continuing evaluative and advisory assistance to the program. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |
| 2. The counselors need to inform the public of the activities of the counseling program through newsletters. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |
| 3. The counseling program needs to participate in the creation of partnerships between businesses and the district. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |
| 4. The counselors need to offer training in school-wide programs. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |
| 5. The counselors need to reach out to community agencies by serving on committees. | 1 2 3 4 5 | A B C D E |

# ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION SAMPLE #2

## (MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS)

Please take a few minutes to let the Counseling Program know how they are doing. Your responses will help them plan for future counseling services.

| | Agree | In the Middle | Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Students need help selecting courses for middle school. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2. Counselors do a good job of helping students select courses. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3. Students need to gain information on making decisions through classroom guidance lessons. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4. Counselors make their classroom guidance lessons interesting. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 5. Students need to learn study skills through small and large group instruction. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 6. Counselors offer opportunities for students to learn study skills. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 7. Students need to learn to manage conflicts through programs such as conflict resolution training. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 8. Counselors offer opportunities for students to learn skills in conflict resolution. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 9. Students need to become aware of their strengths and weaknesses. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 10. Counselors help students become aware of their strengths and weaknesses. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 11. Students need to understand their abilities and interests through standardized tests. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 12. Counselors help students understand their abilities and interests through standardized tests. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 13. Students need to have counseling services available to them when they have concerns. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 14. Counselors do a good job of being available to students when students have concerns. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 15. Students need to understand where to get help outside of school. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 16. Counselors do a good job of helping students get help outside of school. | 1 | 2 | 3 |

## ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION SAMPLE #3

### (ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS)

Listen to each statement as it is read to you and circle the face that shows how you feel about each statement. Remember there are no right or wrong answers.

1. My counselor helps kids. 😫 ☹ 😕 🙂 😀
2. I like my counselor. 😫 ☹ 😕 🙂 😀
3. I like when my counselor comes into my classroom. 😫 ☹ 😕 🙂 😀
4. If I had a problem I would talk to my counselor. 😫 ☹ 😕 🙂 😀
5. I know where my counselor's office is. 😫 ☹ 😕 🙂 😀
6. My parents know who my counselor is. 😫 ☹ 😕 🙂 😀
7. My counselor helps kids when they have difficulty with their friends. 😫 ☹ 😕 🙂 😀
8. My counselor helps kids when they have trouble with their school work. 😫 ☹ 😕 🙂 😀
9. My counselor runs groups for kids. 😫 ☹ 😕 🙂 😀
10. I know how to ask to talk with my counselor. 😫 ☹ 😕 🙂 😀

# ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION SAMPLE #4

Please take a few minutes to let the Counseling Program know how they are doing and help them plan for future counseling services by completing this survey. Below you will find definitions for each of the four components in a comprehensive developmental counseling program. After each one, please describe: what the counselors should continue to do, and what the counselors will be doing more of to improve services.

**I am a (circle one):** High school student
Parent
Teacher
Staff member
Administrator
Board member
Community member

1. A Counseling Curriculum is designed to be a structured program in which all students participate in sequential, developmental activities within classrooms and in large and small groups.

   Counselors should continue to...

   Counselors will be doing more of...

2. Individual Planning provides all students with counseling activities to guide them in developing and implementing their personal-social, education, and career goals and plans on a continual and systematic basis.

   Counselors should continue to...

   Counselors will be doing more of...

3. Responsive Services respond to the direct and immediate concerns of students that impede students in their social, personal, career or educational development.

   Counselors should continue to...

   Counselors will be doing more of...

4. System Support consists of support services such as research and development, program management, community outreach, and professional development, that are necessary in order for the other guidance processes to be effective.

   Counselors should continue to...

   Counselors will be doing more of...

NOTEBOOK

## Likeness Exercise: "Find someone who..."

(Chapter 2)

Leader's Outline

**Purpose:**
Ice breaker activity, sets the expectation of group interaction.

**Materials needed:**

- "Find someone who..." forms
- pens or pencils

**Procedure:**

1. **Pass out "Find someone who..." forms.**

2. **Explain that everyone must circulate around the room and talk with each other, using the phrases on the form as a guide.** When they find a person who has an item in common with them, they sign each other's sheet for that item. Try to get as many different signatures as possible.

3. **Make sure that everyone is mingling and involved in the activity.**

4. **After about 10-15 minutes, bring the group back together.**

5. **Relate the activity to the purpose of the committee by saying:**
"We found out that we have many things in common with the other committee members. Another thing that we have in common is a commitment to creating this counseling program. To be most effective we will need to continue keeping lines of communication open and interacting."

6. **Observe group dynamics, silently noting who seeks out others, and who waits to be approached.**

# FIND SOMEONE WHO...

...is born in the same month: ______________________

...likes the same style of music: ______________________

...shares your first name initial: ______________________

...has the same number of children: ______________________

...has the same type of pet(s): ______________________

...enjoys the same favorite food: ______________________

...belongs to the same ethnic background: ______________________

...pursues the same hobby or sport: ______________________

...has traveled to the same place: ______________________

...speaks the same foreign language(s): ______________________

NOTEBOOK

## Personality Priorities Exercise
(Chapter 2)

**Leader's Outline**

**Purpose:**
to help individuals understand leadership styles.

**Definition:**
superiority, control, comfort, and pleasing are personality characteristics that may reflect an individual's leadership style.

**Materials needed:**
- a picture of each animal - eagle, lion, turtle, chameleon
- masking tape
- blank notebook paper for lists
- pencils or pens

**Procedure:**
1. **Post each picture in a different area of the room. Do not explain the purpose or definition.**

2. **Direct participants to:**
   A. stand by one of the pictures.
   B. discuss the leadership qualities of the animal with the other members of their group.

3. **Direct participants to make 2 lists, so that:**
   A. list #1 contains the leadership characteristics of the animal.
   B. list #2 gives suggestions to others on how to best deal with this animal.

4. **Bring all of the groups together and direct participants to discuss:**
   A. their lists with the entire group.
   B. the positive and negative qualities of each personality priority.
   C. how each "type" of leader can best help the group to function.

## Mission Statement: Strategic Planning Exercise
(Chapter 2)

Leader's Outline

**Definition:**
A mission statement describes what the program is about.

**Materials needed:**
- newsprint
- easel(s) for newsprint, or masking tape if hanging newsprint on wall
- liquid markers
- colored self-adhesive dots (3-5 dots per person), in either the same or varying colors

**Prodecure:**

1. **Idealize the program.** Ask participants the 'miracle question:'
   "Suppose that tonight while you are asleep there is a miracle, and the school counseling program is redesigned in a way you would like it to be. How would you know? What would the program be doing differently?"

2. **Brainstorm.** Participants share their list of characteristics that the new school counseling program would have.
   A. Leader lists characteristics on newsprint.
   B. Hang newsprint around the room or display on easel(s).

3. **Group Vote.**
   A. Give each participant 3-5 dots.
   B. Participants vote silently by placing a dot next to the 3-5 characteristics for which they wish to vote (more that 1 dot can be used on one characteristic to indicate a stronger feeling).

4. **Identify and record top characteristics.**

5. **Separate "mission-oriented" characteristics from "vision-oriented" characteristics.**

6. **List "vision" characteristics separately for use at another time.**

7. **Develop a draft mission statement (as one group or in subgroups).**
   A. Put each key characteristic into a sentence, written in:
      1. the active voice (i.e., "Counselors deliver..." vs. "Students are delivered...").
      2. a positive presentation (what the program will do vs. what it will not do).
      3. the here and now.
      4. specific language.
   B. Link the sentences into an initial mission statement.

8. **Discuss draft mission statement until participants arrive at final mission statement.**
   A. Acknowledge the fears and anxieties expressed.
   B. Focus participants on the process of approaching their fears.

# Vision Statement: Strategic Planning Exercise

(Chapter 2)

**Leader's Outline**

**Purpose:**
to facilitate participants in creating a Vision Statement.

**Definition:**
A Vision Statement describes what the program strives to be.

**Materials needed:**

- newsprint
- easel(s) for newsprint, or masking tape if hanging newsprint on wall
- markers

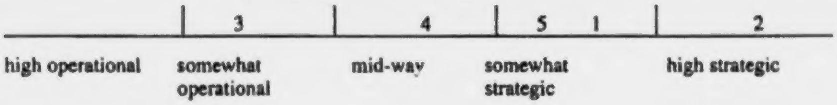
**Procedure:**

1. **List and number each characteristic of the vision.**

2. **Facilitate the group in determining which goals are:**
   A. operational (narrowly focused, immediate, easily defined).
   B. strategic (comprehensive, future-oriented, stated in general terms).

3. **Generate a group discussion to determine where each item falls on the continuum from High Operational to High Strategic. Place the numbers on the continnum as in the example below:**

**The Operational-Strategic Continuum**



4. **Assign task groups to each of the items on the Vision Statement.**

| Solution-focused counseling | Adlerian counseling |
|---|---|
| first-order change | classroom meetings |
| scaling (for children) | cooperative learning |
| second-order change | social interest training |
|  | tasks of life |

# CHAPTER 3

## Comprehensive Developmental Counseling Curriculum

*Tony remembers when he took a course in graduate school entitled, Organization and Administration of School Counseling Services. The professor began by asking people to get into dyads and discuss the mathematics curriculum of any school district they chose (i.e., where they had attended, where their children attend, where they teach, or where they are doing internships). The majority of his classmates readily identified that the math curriculum was developmental—from year to year students learn concepts that are built on those previously learned. For example, students need to count and understand the order of numbers before they can learn the concepts of "greater than" or "less than." They identified that elementary students learn on a concrete level using manipulatives, whereas high school students tend to deal with abstract concepts in Algebra and Calculus. Tony's dyad was also able to name several topic areas and courses in the curriculum.*

*The professor then asked the students to repeat the exercise, but this time they were to choose a school district and discuss its counseling curriculum. The amount of conversation was considerably less than the previous discussion. Most students acknowledged that they had no idea of what the school district's counseling curriculum was or even if it had one.*

### Introduction

According to Gysbers and Henderson (1994) a comprehensive developmental counseling curriculum is a structured program which serves all students. The students participate in sequential, developmental activities which take place in large and small group settings. This emphasis on working with all students contrasts with the way that Lehmanowsky (1991) sees many school counselors actually spending their time. He states that most school counselors work intensively with only a small percentage of their assigned students and have little contact with the rest of their caseload. He would agree with the need for a comprehensive developmental curriculum, since it helps counselors reintegrate themselves into the total school program and offer services to everyone. It is those counselors who get to know their students personally, by providing an array of services to their entire caseload, who will have the greatest influence.

Earlier it was emphasized that counselors need to move from a "position" perspective to a "program" perspective in order to be seen as integral to the learning process. By providing a counseling curriculum counselors better achieve their program in the schools. While classroom guidance lessons are a significant part of a comprehensive developmental program, other components may include: small groups (primarily those that are educational in nature); large groups such as assembly programs, career fairs, or college nights; career development activities; developmental classes such as transitioning to the middle school, orientation to high school; and special programs that are infused into the curriculum such as peer mediation or conflict resolution.

The notion of infusing social training into the curriculum is not new. Early in the twentieth century Adler (1931/1992) advocated the teaching of social skills much like academics:

> The value of cooperation can be taught in the same way that geography can be taught for it is a truth and we can always teach the truth. If a child, or an adult, is tested in geography and he is not prepared, then he fails. If a child, or an adult, is tested in situations that require a knowledge of cooperation and he is not prepared, then he too fails. All our problems need a knowledge of cooperation. (p. 193)

## Designing the Curriculum

### *First-Order and Second-Order Change*

The offering of a new curriculum to help address the needs of a community would be considered a first-order change process according to Watzlawick, Weakland and Fisch (1974). First-order change produces new behaviors without affecting the underlying beliefs or rules of the system. Second-order change involves a fundamental change in the rules governing the system. Therefore, it is vital for counselors to be attuned to the beliefs and rules from which an individual or system operates. As described in Chapter One, solution-focused theory is language-based. By listening to the language a person uses, the counselor can uncover the individual's beliefs and the rules from which he or she operates.

An example is that of a seventh grade boy who was being pressured by his "friends" to beat up another boy who the group did not like. Despite the counselor's attempts to dissuade the student by discussing the consequences with him, the student went ahead and beat up the boy. If the counselor had listened to the underlying belief or rules the student held, perhaps a more enduring solution could have been achieved. It would be necessary for the counselor to make hypotheses about several possible fundamental beliefs held by the student, such as the following: "Loyalty to my friends is paramount;" "No matter what the cost, I will do anything not to lose my friends;" "I feel like a big shot when I get in a fight;" "It's important for my friends to look up to me as being the toughest in the group;" or "It is better to be in trouble than to be alone." Once the counselor gets a clearer idea of which assumption is true, the last one for example, the counselor can help the student to come up with solutions around that assumption rather than about the specific situation at hand. In the last example, "It is better to be in trouble than to be alone," it would be helpful for the counselor to work with the student on ways to make more friends with whom he can share mutual trust and respect. This solution would most likely lead to a second-order change, and the student would realize that he does not have to put himself in an either-or position of either being in trouble or being without friends.

Systems can also be affected by first and second-order changes. An example of a first and second-order change in a system follows. As a result of a needs survey from both faculty and parents, as well as from assessing the school's life-style (as described in Chapter Two), a counselor discovered that the fifth grade teachers had ranked the topic of "responsible choices" as their number one choice for classroom guidance lessons. In listening to the complaints by the fifth grade teachers, the counselor found that the teachers thought negatively about the fifth graders—particularly in terms of their misbehavior in the cafeteria. The teachers described that some students were disrupting the cafeteria routine by sneaking to tables to sit with their friends from other classes rather than sitting at their assigned tables with their classmates. The counselor speculated that if she were to conduct a series of classroom lessons in the fifth grade regarding responsible choices that the students would likely improve their behavior, at least temporarily, effecting a first-order change. The counselor decided that it would be most effective to bring about a second-order change as well. She did this by challenging the faculty to consider their beliefs and rules about the cafeteria situation. The teachers expected fifth graders to walk single file to the cafeteria and sit in assigned seats just as they did in first grade. The counselor pointed out that by fifth grade students might act more responsibly if they were given age-appropriate decisions to make (such as choices about with whom they want to sit for lunch). The counselor shared the example of a nearby district that remodeled its cafeteria with booths and tables to resemble a fast food restaurant. She related that fifth grade students in that school were able to choose where they wanted to sit, and few problems had been reported. In essence she asked the faculty "to try something different." Instead of prohibiting students from making choices about with whom to sit, the faculty encouraged that behavior. In this particular example, the counselor's decision to implement the classroom lessons as well as consult with the teachers helped to ensure a successful transition in the cafeteria. As the students demonstrated that they could handle this level of responsibility, the faculty began to see them as responsible fifth graders as opposed to defiant ones, thus effecting a second-order change. Staff that experience second order changes such as this one may begin to look at other regulations that need revision in order to allow for developmental differences. As teachers notice improvements in the school climate as a result of revamping the regulations, their attitudes will likely change, their "lounge talk" will become more positive, and a shift in the school's life-style will be evident.

Adler's concept of social interest is at the heart of the second-order change process required for true educational reform (Nicoll, 1996). Counselors need to "assist schools to develop healthier life-styles based on democratic principles of community, involvement, equality, mutual respect, caring, cooperation, and responsibility for self and others" (Nicoll, p. 133). Much of the work required to assist schools in changing their life-style goes above and beyond curricular changes alone. It involves the school's organizational culture and management practices as well. While curricular changes could be considered operational, system changes such as these are more strategic (as described in Chapter Two). These procedures will be addressed in more detail in Chapter Nine in the discussion of system support.

## *Step One: Choosing a Model Curriculum*

Several resources are available that provide well-developed counseling curricula (e.g., Gysbers & Henderson, 1994; Pennsylvania Department of Education, 1994) to which counselors and advisory committees can turn. Most curricula share similar domains. The Missouri Model (Gysbers & Henderson), uses three major domains: Career planning and exploration, Knowledge of self and others, and Educational/vocational development. The Pennsylvania Developmental Program of Guidance and Counseling includes the following areas of development: personal, social, educational, and career. Although these models serve as excellent starting points in the development of a curriculum, each district must tailor its own curriculum around the needs identified in the community.

## *Step Two: Personalizing the Curriculum*

The counseling curriculum should serve as a blue print, insuring that foundational skills are mastered before more advanced skills are taught. For example, if in fifth grade, students learn how to use "I-messages," then it is imperative that in earlier grades the students learned to identify and express feelings. Therefore, once the major domains are determined, it is necessary to identify the competencies that students should achieve at each grade level. In many districts counselors are free to use activities of their choice to achieve these objectives. In other districts specific activities or packaged curricula are chosen for the counselors to follow. In both cases, the curriculum is predictable and serves as a framework. A counselor at the middle school, for example, will know what the children learned up to this point through the curriculum in elementary school. In the event a new counselor is hired at any level, the counselor will know what has been previously covered. In districts without a curriculum, there is a chance that students have gaps in their learning. Also it is easy for counselors to focus in on their favorite subject areas or to offer a "piece-meal" approach based on the latest workshop the counselor has attended.

While many curricula identify competencies to be achieved at the end of each grade or level (e.g., high school), a solution-focused curriculum would write the objectives in process goal terms such as: As a result of this lesson, students will be using "I-messages." A good practice for solution-focused counselors is to end each lesson with the students putting on paper what they will be doing as a result of the lesson. For example, following the "I-message" lesson students might write responses on a form like the one found on page 45:

*I will be using "I-messages" with my sister when she makes me mad.*

*I will be practicing two "I-messages" every day.*

The counselor may collect the forms or allow the students to keep them as reminders.

Having a counseling curriculum does not have to rule out flexibility. Again, those persons writing the curriculum will need to reflect the identified needs of the community. For example, in communities where the majority of students tend to join the labor force upon graduation, the curriculum should emphasize school-to-work initiatives more than in a community where most students go off to four-year colleges, (although it is recognized that those districts should present the option in their curriculum, since it might be a better choice for some of their students).

It is also important to leave room in the curriculum to handle specific requests by teachers around issues that arise. For example, in one district, several teachers requested lessons on understanding differences, after many students with severe learning and physical differences returned to the home district. This change resulted from the discontinuation of service subcontracting by the local intermediate school district.

Counselors may want to have available request forms that allow teachers to write out their specific curriculum needs and identify the expected goals. A request for the above situation might be written as:

What would you like to change or do differently?

*Two students with severe physical differences have been mainstreamed in my classroom. Most of the students have been polite and helpful to them, but I would like to get my class to talk openly about differences, and I'd like to feel more comfortable addressing it with my class. It'd be great if you could come in to break the ice, and then with some suggestions from you I think I could continue to carry out discussions and activities.*

### Step Three: Deciding How the Curriculum Will Be Delivered

Once the curriculum is written, counselors must decide which mode of delivery will be used to teach each of the competencies. Counselors may choose the classroom setting to teach skills that are developmental and preventative in nature such as identifying feelings, steps in decision-making or study skills. The classroom setting is also ideal for the dissemination of information in the area of interests, careers, testing, and post-secondary education. In some instances, larger group settings such as assemblies are the most time-effective. Motivational speakers, demonstrations, and movies might be appropriate for large groups. Smaller groups may be more appropriate for students who need more intensive personal attention beyond that which can be offered in the classroom. Small groups that are psycho-educational can be considered components of the Curriculum, while small groups that are more therapeutic are a component of Responsive Services and are discussed in Chapter Seven.

Counselors will also need to decide who will implement the curriculum. This implementation varies greatly by district. In the exemplary developmental guidance programs in Connecticut presented by Tarasuk (1991) variety among the levels is shown. The example given from the elementary level shows the elementary counselor implementing the curriculum in its entirety. The curriculum is a high priority in the program. At the middle school, the counselors act as consultants to the homeroom teachers who implement the classroom guidance components of the curriculum. The counselors design the activities to cover each objective, train the homeroom teachers in conducting the lessons, and follow up on the implementation. At the high school level, guidance is scheduled right in with the students' other classes. The counselors conduct the lessons. In this case the classroom guidance was definitely part of the curriculum.

## Transitioning to a Comprehensive Developmental Counseling Curriculum

Counselors may see the need for a comprehensive developmental counseling curriculum but may have difficulty imagining how they could shift to such a system with all that they have to do. Many counselors are afraid to box themselves into a set schedule for fear that an emergency will arise and they will either be unavailable to deal with the emergency or will have to cancel the classroom lesson at the last minute.

We have both worked in schools where classroom guidance was a strong component of the counseling program. Surprisingly, conflicts resulting in the need to cancel classroom lessons have been few and far between. In schools where staff depend on counselors alone to handle "crises" then this may be more problematic. The message of this book, however, is to become "A School with Solutions," where the entire faculty works together when difficulties arise. Counselors who are assigned to multiple schools can vouch for the fact that indeed staff members do respect their multiple responsibilities and do handle situations on days when the counselor is not there. In those situations, they usually have the arrangement that upon the counselor's arrival at the school, the staff members will immediately brief the counselor on the occurrence, and the counselor will follow up as necessary.

In his book, The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, Stephen Covey (1989) illustrates a model that shows when people focus on areas of prevention, the occurrence of crisis is greatly reduced. He encourages people to evaluate their job-related tasks in terms of being urgent and not urgent. Dealing with a child who is refusing to get out of her parent's car to come into school might be urgent, whereas filing the recent school-wide achievement test results is not. The other continuum that Covey discusses is "important" and "not important." The school-wide achievement test results are important, while reading promotional junk mail is not. Covey depicts these two dimensions in a time management matrix (figure 03-01 found on page 38). Quadrant II of the matrix contains those activities which are important but not urgent—which would include the area of curriculum. This quadrant is concerned with the areas of prevention, relationship building, planning, and recognizing new opportunities. The model (as depicted in figure 03-02) illustrates that as more energy is put into these prevention activities, Quadrant II expands and minimizes the other quadrants. The result is balance, a realization of the vision, control, and few crises. The results are a stark contrast to what occurs when individuals spend their time primarily in Quadrants I, III, and IV (as illustrated in figure 03-03). When schools make a serious effort to become prevention-focused, they maximize their time through activities in Quadrant II. The ideal avenue for schools to serve all students in a developmental and preventative manner is through the curriculum that has a focus on solutions. Like solution-focused theory, Covey advocates an emphasis on solutions rather than problems when he quotes a management expert, "To paraphrase Peter Drucker, effective people are not problem-minded, they're opportunity minded" (p. 154).

## Selected Solution-Focused/Adlerian Concepts to Consider in Designing the Curriculum

In this section there are several examples of how counselors could implement solution-focused/Adlerian concepts into counseling curricula. They are in no way meant to be an exhaustive list but rather to show counselors how once they begin to think in solution-focused/Adlerian terms they can most likely adapt what they are presently doing to a solution-focused approach.

### *Scaling Through the Use of Smiley-Frowny Faces and Feelometers*

As an elementary counselor in the early 1980's, I (LaFountain, 1983) worked in a small district in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan where I was responsible for approximately 400 students in a preK-6 school. A major component of the program was the developmental curriculum. I went into each classroom a half-hour per week which still left me with three and a half days to carry out the rest of my program. With this kind of schedule I had weekly contact with all of my students, who I got to know well, since my classroom visits were participatory in nature. In addition, I created a method to touch base with each of the students in kindergarten through sixth grade each week. I did this through the use of Smiley-Frowny Face Sheets and Feelometers (found on pages 47-48) a scaling exercise made more concrete for the elementary students through the use of pictures.

I used to conclude my weekly classroom visits by asking the students in K-2 to fill out the Smiley-Frowny sheets and the older students to fill out the Feelometers. I would tell the younger children, "Look at the faces next to the school. The first one feels very sad about school. The next one is a little unhappy about school. The one in the middle sometimes feels sad about school and sometimes feels happy about school. The next one is glad about school, and the last one is very happy about school. When you think about school which one do you feel like? Put an X on the one that shows how you feel about school." The same procedure was followed concerning the children's feelings about friends and family. I would then tell the children to put their name on the top line and check the box if they wanted to speak to me. A similar method was followed for the older children. I told the students that the feelometers could show their feelings similar to how a thermometer shows their temperature. I then told them to look at the first feelometer and to color from the bulb up to the point that shows how they are feeling about school: very unhappy, sad, half sad-half happy, glad, or very happy. Similarly I told them to put an X in the box if they wanted to talk to me.

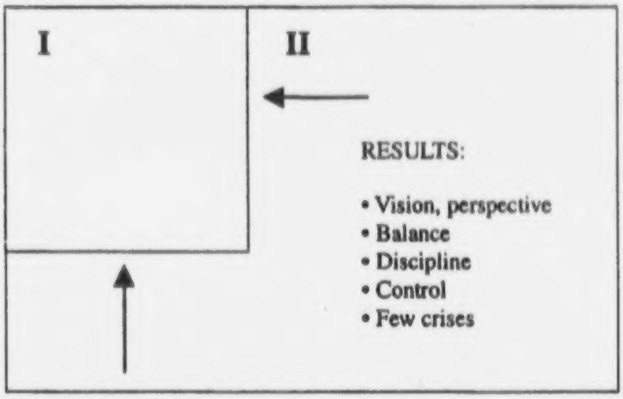
In both levels, I encouraged students to write a note on the back of the form if they wanted to. A solution-focused counselor ideally could take this opportunity to have the students write their process goal on the back of the form as a result of the recent classroom lesson (i.e., "I will be using 'I-messages' when my sister starts arguing with me.")

This process takes students only a few minutes to complete and it takes the counselor five or ten minutes to sift through the forms upon leaving the class. Counselors will find that they get to know the students very well through this method and that they can easily recognize any drastic changes from a student's normal trend of responding. If a child has always marked "happy" about his or her family situation and then all of a sudden marks "very sad," the counselor is alerted of a change. Sometimes the

## THE TIME MANAGEMENT MATRIX

| | Urgent | Not Urgent |
|---|---|---|
| Important | I<br>ACTIVITIES:<br>Crises<br>Pressing problems<br>Deadline-driven projects | II<br>ACTIVITIES:<br>Prevention, PC activities<br>Relationship building<br>Recognizing new opportunities<br>Planning, recreation |
| Not Important | III<br>ACTIVITIES:<br>Interruptions, some calls<br>Some mail, some reports<br>Some meetings<br>Proximate, pressing matters<br>Popular activities | IV<br>ACTIVITIES:<br>Trivia, busy work<br>Some mail<br>Some phone calls<br>Time wasters<br>Pleasant activities |

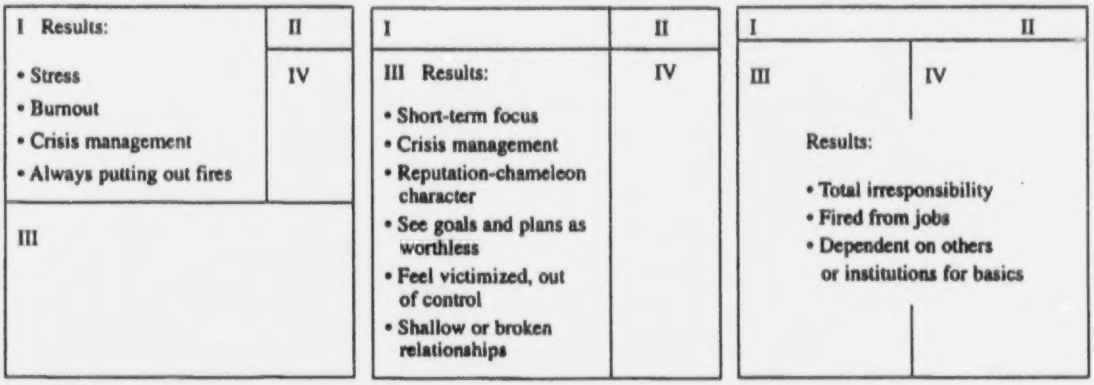
*Figure 03-01.*



RESULTS:

- Vision, perspective
- Balance
- Discipline
- Control
- Few crises

*Figure 03-02.*



I Results:

- Stress
- Burnout
- Crisis management
- Always putting out fires

III Results:

- Short-term focus
- Crisis management
- Reputation-chameleon character
- See goals and plans as worthless
- Feel victimized, out of control
- Shallow or broken relationships

Results:

- Total irresponsibility
- Fired from jobs
- Dependent on others or institutions for basics

*Figure 03-03.*

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child's message will clarify the child's change in feelings (i.e., "My sister just left for the Army.") The counselor may decide to explore the change with the child, to check with the teacher, or to see if the feeling persists.

These forms can also serve as springboards for discussing goals. When students mark that they are feeling sad about something, and indicate that they would like to make a change, the counselor can help them set a process goal related to the problem. The procedure of using Smiley-Frowny forms and Feelometers is discussed in greater detail in LaFountain (1983).

## A Curriculum in Social Interest Training

Nicoll (1994) reports that although classroom guidance programs are wide-spread, their effectiveness has mixed results. He cites Myrick (1987), "Without solid grounding in a developmental theory or rationale, classroom guidance programs are often used inappropriately or misused by well-intentioned counselors" (p. 361). Unfortunately activities are used in isolation rather than combining them into a comprehensive program based on a clearly delineated, theoretical framework. According to Nicoll, "Adlerian Psychology is perhaps the only personality and counseling theory that provides a useful theoretical framework from which to develop classroom guidance programs" (p. 361).

Ansbacher (1968, cited in Nicoll, 1996) acknowledged that Adler suggested in his writings a three-stage model for the development of social interest. Adler stated that social interest is an innate aptitude with which people are born. In the initial stage social interest is developed through training in the home, school, and community. In stage two children learn social interest through objective social skills training which involves: a) understanding self and others, b) empathy skills, c) communication skills, d) cooperation skills, and e) responsibility skills. In stage three individuals develop an evaluative attitude by which they weigh the choices made by themselves and others based upon the objective social skills.

Nicoll (1994) suggests that counselors develop a classroom guidance curriculum based on the five skills described above in stage two. He states that each skill can be repeated through each grade level in a spiral-like manner—which means including the same skills each year but at the appropriate developmental levels.

Nicoll (1996) recommends that educators use this developmental model of social interest to implement curricula in the schools which will teach the skills necessary for living in a democratic society. To create such a curriculum, counselors need to concentrate on stage two, which focuses on the development of social skills. This social area could serve as one of the domains in a comprehensive counseling curriculum, and the five skills listed above could serve as areas of concentration. Counselors who choose to develop a curriculum based on the social interest model can write their own curriculum, refer to existing commercial programs such as the classic curriculum, Developing Understanding of Self and Others by Dinkmeyer and Dinkmeyer (1982) which is built on Adlerian principles, or adapt an existing curriculum to a solution-focused/Adlerian one.

On page 40 there is an example of how a typical lesson plan can be adapted to a solution-focused/Adlerian one. The lesson comes from the social domain and concentrates on the area of communication. This particular example focuses on a basic skill that helps children to be more communicative and able to socialize more easily—to answer others' questions in more than one-word responses. This is a basic skill that adults may take for granted and assume that children know.

## Traditional Lesson Plan
### Grade One
### "Overcoming Shyness"

Goal: To help students to be more communicative.

Steps:

1. Counselor shows a story card of two children in a conversation, with one child asking a question and the other one looking sheepish and answering in a one-word response.
2. Counselor asks students to describe what is going on in the picture. Counselor asks students how the children in the picture are feeling.
3. Counselor asks students if they ever had the feelings that are brought up and how they handled those feelings.
4. Counselor explains to the students that one way to appear less shy is to answer in more than one-word sentences so that the other person can learn more about them and have more to talk about with them.
5. Counselor tells the students that they are going to have the opportunity to practice conversations where they answer in more than one-word. Counselor calls on a volunteer to demonstrate a role play in front of the class.
6. Students pair up and counselor structures the practice sessions by passing out a card with a question on it to one person in each of the dyads. The person is instructed to ask the question and the partner is to answer in more than one-word. The counselor encourages students to carry on the conversation back and forth for a minute. The roles are reversed and the counselor passes out a different question to the other partner and the activity is repeated.
7. The entire activity is repeated again with the first partner initiating the conversation but this time the counselor does not structure it with a question on a card. The students can begin their conversations with any question.
8. In the large group the counselor processes how the activity felt and encourages the students to practice answering others (outside of the classroom) with more than one-word answers.

## Solution-Focused/Adlerian Lesson Plan
### Grade One
### "Times we are Comfortable in Conversation"

Process Goal: Students will be practicing responses that are more than one-word.

Steps:

1. Counselor shows a story card of two children in a conversation, with one child asking a question and the other one looking sheepish and answering in a one-word response.
2. Counselor asks students to describe what is going on in the picture. Counselor relabels statements as they come up to allow students to see new possibilities (e.g., If a student says this child is shy, the counselor restates it as, "At times this child chooses to be quiet.").
3. Counselor asks students what is going on with the child who chooses to be quiet (elicits the students' beliefs).
4. Counselor asks the students to think of times they felt comfortable in conversations (elicits exceptions to times people feel uncomfortable) and asks how they acted in those situations (elicits solutions).
5. Counselor tells the students that they are going to have the opportunity to practice conversations where they answer in more than one-word. Counselor calls on a volunteer to demonstrate a role play in front of the class.
6. Students pair up and counselor structures the practice sessions by passing out a card with a question on it to one person in each of the dyads. The person is instructed to ask the question and the partner is to answer in more than one-word. The counselor encourages students to carry on the conversation back and forth for a minute. The roles are reversed and the counselor passes out a different question to the other partner and the activity is repeated.
7. The entire activity is repeated again with the first partner initiating the conversation but this time the counselor does not structure it with a question on a card. The students can begin their conversations with any question.
8. In the large group the counselor asks students to share examples of responses that they gave that were more than one-word. The counselor emphasizes with the students that when people share of themselves in conversation that this is "social interest" and "cooperation" and asks the students how the process went when they were cooperating with each other. The counselor gives the students a "homework assignment" to practice answering with more than one-word with at least two people each day until the next classroom lesson.

In this particular traditional lesson plan the goal is written in terms of what the counselor will do, although some traditional lesson plans do show the objective written in terms of the students. In a solution-focused/Adlerian lesson plan the goals are written as process goals and in terms of what the students will be doing. This example shows how a counselor can take a traditional lesson plan and make it solution-focused by using approaches such as: relabeling, listening to the beliefs behind the language, eliciting exceptions and solutions, and giving students specific "homework." The activity is made Adlerian by emphasizing Adlerian concepts such as cooperation and social interest. For example, while the counselor in the traditional example focuses on the feelings that the children recognize in the story card, the counselor in the solution-focused/Adlerian example emphasizes the beliefs that the children have about what is going on in the story card. The counselor does this by relabeling statements that the children use, in order to allow the children the opportunity to see a situation from many perspectives.

Later in the lesson both counselors attempt to teach the children a new social skill (e.g., answering in more than one-word). While the traditional counselor teaches the skill as "one size fits all," the solution-focused/Adlerian counselor first finds out what has already worked for the children (elicits exceptions and solutions), and helps them apply those skills to this new situation. In both lesson plans the counselors provide the children with opportunities to practice the new skill. The traditional counselor summarizes the lesson by capitalizing on feelings and encouraging the students to continue to practice the new skill. The solution-focused/Adlerian counselor concludes the lesson with an emphasis on social interest and cooperation and gives students a specific "homework assignment" to practice answering in more than one-word with at least two persons each day.

Focusing on social skills addresses two of Adler's three tasks of life. Adler believed that all human problems could be grouped under three main headings—occupational, social, and intimacy (Adler, 1931/1992). It is interesting that these three tasks of life parallel similar areas that many curricula cover. As mentioned earlier, the Missouri Model (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994), uses three major domains: Career planning and exploration, Knowledge of self and others, and Educational/vocational development. While knowledge of self and others would be most consistent with Adler's social and intimacy tasks of life, career planning and exploration and educational/vocational development would fall within Adler's occupational task of life.

A program built on lessons that foster skill development in the tasks of life, such as the social skills example above, provides many optimistic possibilities within the classroom. "Such a program would promote not only positive individual social development but also positively affect classroom group development" (Nicoll, 1996, p. 142). Classroom development can be affected by cooperative learning, a method of classroom instruction, and by conducting class meetings.

## Cooperative Learning

Adler spoke about the importance of cooperation in the classroom in the early 1930's when he said:

> Under our present system we generally find that when children first come to school they are better prepared for competition than for cooperation, and the training in competition continues throughout their school days... As the family should be a unit, with each member an equal part of the whole, so too should the class. When they are trained in this way, children are really interested in one another, and enjoy cooperation. (1931/1992, p. 141)

Cooperative learning groups are small groups composed of students, differing in their skills and personal characteristics, who work together to achieve academic and social goals (Clark, 1988). They are "social-oriented, goal-striving, creative, active, and demonstrate social interest" ( p. 191).

Dreikurs felt that cooperative interaction fosters respect for others and social equality. He believed that schools traditionally encourage competition among the students which leads to superior-inferior student positionings, instead of promoting cooperation. Dreikurs (1968) advocated the use of group projects and wrote about them in the following:

> They stimulate cooperative efforts. The child does not serve selfish ends, but goals of the whole group if he participates in a group project. He can gain status and enjoy the significance of his contribution even if it is less impressive than his fellow students. Each can make his own significant contribution without any comparative evaluation with that of others. ( p. 78)

Unfortunately not all group projects can be considered to be cooperative learning. In cooperative learning groups there are specific procedures for the classroom teacher to carry out. Although there are several models for cooperative learning, Clark (1988) highlights the Johnson and Johnson system (1986, 1987) which establishes the teacher's role as a managerial and organizational one. The teacher's first responsibility is to organize the groups ranging from two to six students, with four being the most common. Teachers should assign students to each group to ensure that the groups are heterogeneous on such factors as performance level, task orientation, sex, and ethnicity. According to Johnson and Johnson, low achieving students and those students with inconsistent levels of motivation are stimulated by more advanced students and those with more consistent levels of motivation.

In cooperative learning groups teachers arrange goals, resources, roles, and tasks that encourage shared responsibility and reliance upon each other to meet the expectations. Face-to-face interaction, individual accountability, collaborative skills, and processing are also essential elements of cooperative learning. In cooperative learning groups the members all work on a single project or paper. Students may be given a group grade with possible bonus points when each individual team member reaches the criterion for individual evaluations. Positive resource interdependence requires the sharing of materials or information in order to complete the project. Role assignments provide each team member with his or her function in the group. Task assignments relate to the specific responsibilities each group member needs to contribute to the project. Face-to-face interaction includes verbal discussion patterns such as explaining, integrating, and summarizing that help students assimilate the information. Teachers hold students accountable for their individual level of learning through team members' evaluations and quizzes. Teachers promote collaborative skills and encourage groups to periodically process how the group is functioning, how members are handling their responsibilities and relating to each other. Cooperative learning is a practical application of the principles of Adlerian psychology (Clark, 1988). Solution-focused techniques can easily be interwoven into the process.

As described above, the cooperative learning process is goal oriented. It is helpful if all of the goals, criterion levels, role and task assignments are written in process goals. For example, the student who is assigned the role of coordinator, and has the task of researching the educational system in France, can state his process goal as it relates to his role as, "At the beginning of each social studies class period I will be checking on the progress of each team member." He can have a second process goal related to his assigned task, "Each day I will be finding at least two new resources on the educational system in France." The more social-related issues that can arise in the cooperative learning group process, such as level of communication and handling of responsibility, can be handled through solution-focused collaboration or conflict resolution, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

## Classroom Meetings

"Adler introduced class discussions for mutual understanding and conflict resolution. Rudolf Dreikurs later expanded and systematized Adler's practices for the classroom teacher" (Clark, 1988, p. 192). The classroom meeting is a format which takes a systemic approach to handling classroom difficulties, meaning that classroom difficulties are regarded as a result of the classroom's unique dynamics. Teachers who are trained in group dynamics can recognize the interrelationship among the children, and between the teacher and the children, and use this forum as a democratic outlet for problem-solving in the classroom (Dinkmeyer, McKay, & Dinkmeyer, 1980; Dreikurs, Grunwald, & Pepper, 1971). In classroom meetings discipline is handled in a logical and nonpunitive way. The democratic process removes the teacher from the role of disciplinarian and can help eliminate power struggles between the teacher and students. This does not mean that the process is laissez-faire. Instead, boundaries are made clear, and students are allowed to make choices within those limits. Students who make irresponsible choices are given the opportunity to learn from their choices through logical consequences. Adlerian approaches to discipline are discussed in more depth in Chapter Nine.

Dreikurs et al. (1971) outlined several necessary guidelines for effective class meetings. They felt that initially the teacher needed to structure the group but within a few weeks natural leadership from students would emerge. The teacher then acts as a facilitator or consultant. Initially the teacher provides structure and guidance by: a) helping the class members establish group rules which will emphasize cooperation; b) encouraging participation from all class members and paying particular attention to invite the less verbal students to contribute; c) modeling the process of thinking through their experiences and coming up with solutions; d) mediating when touchy subjects arise until certain students surface as appropriately moderating when hurtful comments are made; e) stimulating ideas and topics for discussion; f) encouraging group decisions and the acceptance of the consequences for their decisions; and g) ensuring on-going evaluation of the group process.

Solution-focused techniques can easily be introduced into classroom meetings. To keep the perspective solution-focused rather than problem-centered, the teacher or student leader can ask, "What is it you would like to change or do differently?"

Since each class has a unique personality, the class can rely on its own strengths and resources it has used in the past to solve difficulties. To encourage this the teacher or leader can ask, "When is a time we don't have this difficulty?" or "How have we dealt with this in the past?" If it is a reoccurring problem and the same methods have been tried over and over, the class can brainstorm ways to handle it differently. Once a solution is agreed upon, a process goal can be written to ensure that the necessary movement toward the goal will be undertaken. Again, some of the strategies to be discussed in Chapter Four regarding conflict resolution may be helpful in classroom meetings.

## Becoming Solution-Focused Within an Adlerian Framework

A major emphasis in solution-focused theory is that individuals use the strengths they already possess to carry out the solutions to their difficulty. Faculty and staff members of schools that desire to become solution-focused need to first ask what they are already doing that is solution-focused and Adlerian. It is possible that while counselors have been reading this chapter that they said to themselves, "We already do this." On page 44 is a checklist for counselors to determine what they are already doing that they want to keep doing (in terms of being solution-focused/Adlerian) and ways they can make the activities they are already doing fit the solution-focused/Adlerian model more.

## Conclusion

A comprehensive developmental counseling curriculum is a structural program which serves all students through sequential, developmental activities. Systems can be affected by first and second-order changes. First-order change, such as a curricular change, is one that produces new behaviors without affecting underlying rules of the system. Second-order change involves a fundamental change in the rules governing the system. Steps for designing a comprehensive developmental counseling curriculum involve: choosing a model curriculum, personalizing the curriculum, and deciding how the curriculum will be delivered. Although transitioning to a comprehensive curriculum can be challenging, solutions are readily available. In developing a solution-focused/Adlerian curriculum, counselors can adopt program elements that are either solution-focused and/or Adlerian or follow the guidelines given to adapt their existing program to one within a solution-focused/Adlerian framework.

# What We Are Already Doing That Is Solution-Focused/Adlerian Counseling Curriculum Component

1. **Check which activities:**
   - **A. you are already doing.**
   - **B. you are doing in a solution-focused way.**
   - **C. you are doing in an Adlerian way.**
2. **Brainstorm ways to adapt the activities to a solution-focused/Adlerian model.**

| **Activity** Currently doing and would like to continue to do | Activity is | | To adapt it to a Solution-Focused/ Adlerian model we will be... |
|---|---|---|---|
| | SF | AD | |
| Classroom guidance lessons | | | |
| Small educational groups | | | |
| Assembly programs | | | |
| Career fairs | | | |
| College nights | | | |
| Career development activities | | | |
| Conflict resolution | | | |
| Cooperative learning | | | |
| Class Meetings | | | |
| Other | | | |

**SF = Solution-Focused**

**AD = Adlerian**

## END OF LESSON WRAP-UP

NAME ______________________________ DATE ____________

Now that you have just finished the lesson on________________________, what will you be doing to make a change or do things differently in your life?

**Special Note: Write your process goal in the form of: "I will be...(+ action verb)"**

I WILL BE ____________________________________________

## END OF LESSON WRAP-UP

NAME ______________________________ DATE ____________

Now that you have just finished the lesson on________________________, what will you be doing to make a change or do things differently in your life?

**Special Note: Write your process goal in the form of: "I will be...(+ action verb)"**

I WILL BE ____________________________________________

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# TEACHER REQUEST FOR CLASSROOM GUIDANCE LESSONS

**Teacher's Name** ____________________

**Date** ____________________

**Class** ____________________

**1. Please describe your specific curriculum needs.**

____________________

____________________

____________________

____________________

**2. Please identify your expected goals. As a result of classroom guidance lessons:**

**A. What would you like to change or do differently?**

____________________

____________________

____________________

____________________

**B. What will your class be doing differently?**

____________________

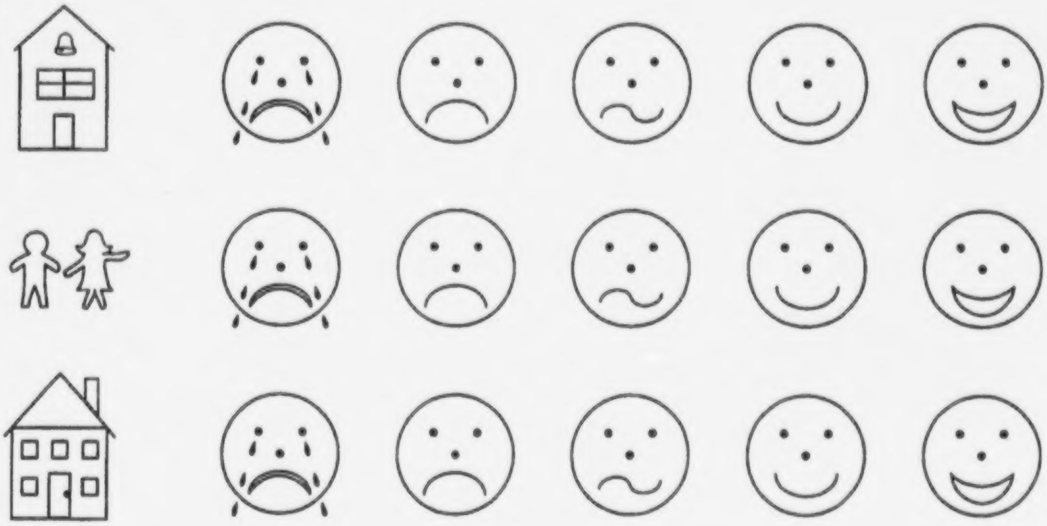
____________________

____________________

____________________

# SMILEY-FROWNY FORM

Name: ______________________________ ☐



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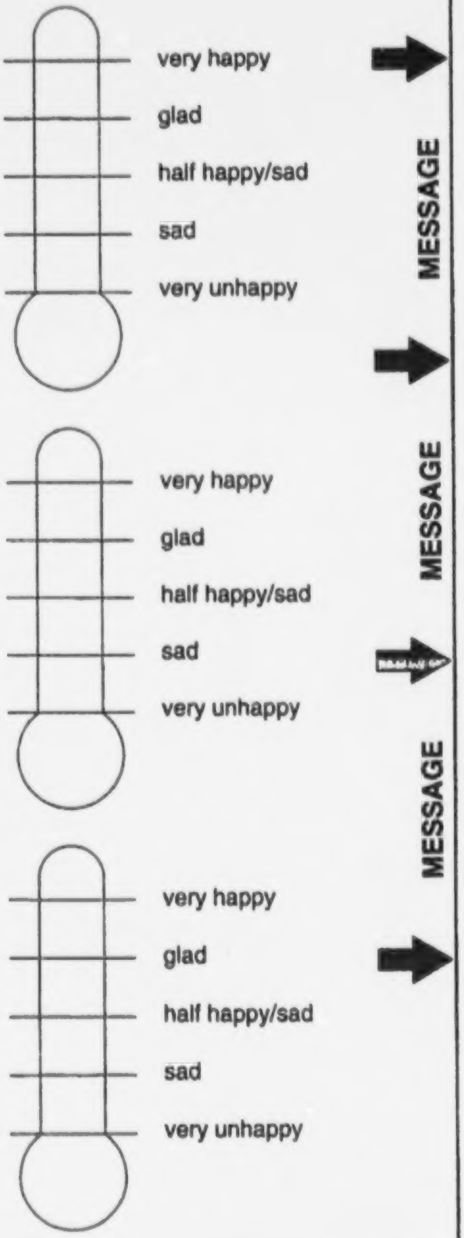
# FEELOMETER

Name

How are you feeling about school?
☐

How are you feeling about friends?
☐

How are you feeling about family?
☐



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| Solution-focused counseling | Adlerian counseling |
|---|---|
| beliefs | cooperation |
| scaling | exploring alternatives |
| solutions | mutual respect |
| trying something different | needs and motivation |
|  | social equity |
|  | social interest |

4 4
CHAPTER
4 4

# A Conflict Resolution-Focused Program:

## Part of a Comprehensive Developmental Counseling Curriculum

*Misti ran into Donna, one of her former classmates from graduate school, at the state school counselors' conference. They had both taken positions at the middle school level when they graduated four years prior. They had a lot to talk about as they caught up on old news and how their jobs were going. Donna expressed frustration with the steady flow of students coming into her office with complaints about friends and fights. She shared that she felt like she was constantly putting out fires only to find them refueled again when a new issue arose. Misti agreed that she had felt the same way until last year when they implemented a conflict resolution program in her school. She admitted that initially it took a big investment in time but that this year she was beginning to experience the benefits. For one thing she enjoyed the close working relationship that came out of the "team" of trainers who took on the project. In addition to herself, was a sixth grade teacher, a special education teacher, and the nurse. She thought that it was important that the conflict resolution program was not just a counseling program, but a curricular one that involved a team, thus spreading the ownership among the staff. She found it especially rewarding to see the students learning the skills, discussing their problems, and discovering solutions. Best of all, many of the peer problems that Donna agonized over would be taken care of through conflict resolution, and already Misti experienced a reprieve in those kind of referrals. Donna was encouraged by what she heard from Misti and was happy that when she looked through the conference program she would have several opportunities throughout the conference to learn more about conflict resolution programs.*

## Introduction to Conflict Resolution

### *Components*

Conflict resolution programs in the schools are rapidly expanding (Cheatham, 1988; Koch & Miller, 1987; cited in Clark, 1994). There are many different models that use a variety of terminology (e.g., conflict management, peer mediation, anger management). Conflict resolution programs are considered a part of the curriculum when they are viewed as an integral component to the overall school program and serve, or are available to, all students.

Sweeney and Carruthers (1996) define a conflict resolution curriculum as: a set of planned and sequential instructional activities with goals and objectives designed to effect changes in students' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to their understanding of conflict, attitude toward resolving interpersonal conflicts, and ability to use communication and problem-solving skills in a constructive manner that leads to peaceful, equitable, and collaborative resolutions. (p. 335)

In their review of conflict resolution programs, Sweeney and Carruthers (1996) found that there are many similarities and common themes across curricula. They found that almost every program addresses an understanding of what conflict is—the theoretical part of the program. Conflict is generally defined as being natural in interpersonal relations with the outcomes being negative or positive. A second component in most conflict resolution programs is the process of resolving conflicts with a nonviolent emphasis. This theme has both theoretical and practical components. Discussion of ways to resolve conflict such as war, fighting, or negotiation is a theoretical aspect, while providing opportunities for students to learn and practice skills such as negotiation is a practical aspect. The final theme is the teaching of intrapersonal and interpersonal lessons. Intrapersonal lessons address topics such as discussions of character traits and practice with anger management, while interpersonal lessons involve the practice of communication skills and problem solving. Sweeney and Carruthers (1996) found that most programs shared the following benefits: cooperation, communication, compromise, collaboration, and nonviolent solutions.

### Models

Carruthers, Carruthers, Day-Vines, Bostick and Watson (1996) cite a variety of modes of delivery for conflict resolution programs. For example, in the Wake County Public School System in Raleigh, NC, some of the schools have established a semester elective for teaching conflict resolution principles and practices. Other schools use periods set aside for small group guidance-oriented instruction for the implementation of a conflict resolution curriculum. Eisler, Lane and Mei (1995, cited in Carruthers et al., 1996) describe negotiation specialists in New York City schools who are high school teachers who spend twenty percent of their time as negotiation specialists, most of whom teach a course or unit on negotiation. The result is that ten percent of the students receive the instruction. Many authors (DeJong, 1994; Graham & Cline, 1989; Koch & Miller, 1987; and Pipkin & DiMenna, 1989; cited in Carruthers et al., 1996) discuss the incorporation of conflict resolution curriculum into such subjects as social studies, language arts, and drama.

Carruthers et al. (1996) emphasize that a conflict resolution curriculum needs to be developmental in that it meets the needs and abilities of students at different levels. They use a triangular model to describe to teachers at one level how their instruction relates to students at varying levels (see figure 04-01 p. 53). The triangle depicts the body of knowledge, attitudes, and skills taught in the conflict resolution curriculum and the K-12 designation on the right side shows how the units of instruction impact subsequent grade levels. The sequence flows from the unit "About Violence" to the one on "Interpersonal Relations" and the scope or breadth of the curriculum suggests the degree of applicability each unit of instruction has on the curriculum. For example, "Interpersonal Relations," which is shown at the base of the triangle, depicts the broadest applicability across grade levels, while "About Violence," found at the apex of the triangle, shows the least applicability across subjects.

## Solution-Focused Conflict Resolution

School counselors can readily apply solution-focused techniques to conflict resolution. Zinck and Littrell (1998) present a model for solution-focused brief counseling and peer-centered conflict resolution through a case study that encourages students to solve conflicts at the peer level. They found that when adults are the only ones that expend energy in solving the students' conflicts, the students reserve their energy to continue the conflict. In the model, counselors pay particular attention to language in order to reframe situations and promote change. They include several solution-focused strategies such as the video technique. In the video technique, the counselor asks students, "If someone were reviewing a videotape of the two of you getting along next week, what would they see?" (p. 171).

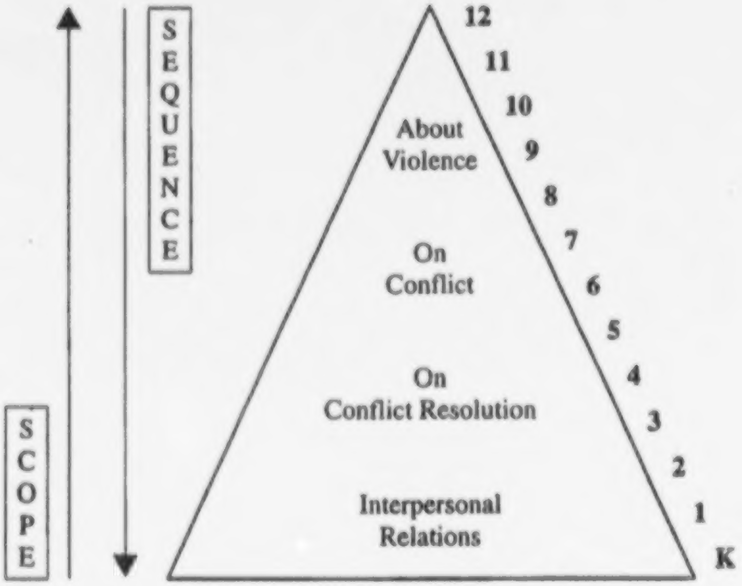

Figure 04-01
A Developmental Model of CR Curriculum

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## Social Interest

Stott and Monsma (1994, cited in Sweeney & Carruthers, 1996) state that while most educators have some training in communication, few have a theoretical understanding of human behavior relevant to conflict resolution. Carruthers, Shulman, and Sweeney (1994) offer Adler's Individual Psychology as a sound theoretical basis. The conflict resolution processes such as compromise and collaboration are examples of social interest.

We suggested in Chapter Three that the counseling curriculum could be based on Adler's developmental model of social interest. A review of the specific objectives of the social interest model shows that they encompass the goals of a conflict resolution curriculum. The specific objectives of the social interest model are: a) understanding self and others, b) empathy skills, c) communication skills, d) cooperation skills, and e) responsibility skills. When counselors develop their programs from a sound theoretical framework the various components are easily integrated.

## Applying Solution-Focused/Adlerian Concepts to Conflict Resolution

One specific component in the conflict resolution curriculum is for counselors to provide the opportunity for students to experience the conflict resolution process. Again, there are many models for the conflict resolution process. In some formats, the counselor mediates the dispute; in other models, trained staff members handle the process; and other programs are carried out by trained students. Clark (1994) emphasizes the influence of Adlerian theory in the conflict resolution process and describes an approach that has wide application in the schools, "Cooperation, social equity, and mutual respect are values within Individual Psychology that amplify the theoretical base of conflict resolution approaches" (p. 338). He contends that through cooperation the disputants generate creative solutions.

According to Terner and Pew (1978, cited in Clark, 1994), in the 1950's Dreikurs developed principles of conflict solving that can be practiced at home and school based on four principles: establishing mutual respect, pinpointing the issue, exploring alternatives, and sharing responsibility in decision making. Below, these four principles are described from an Adlerian perspective (based on Clark, 1994) with the integration of solution-focused theory.

## Establishing Mutual Respect

In a conflict resolution session, the trained mediator attempts to establish mutual respect and trust among the disputants. The mediator allows for each person to express his or her perception in a forum that promotes respect and equality, "Equality means that people, despite their individual differences and abilities, have equal claims to dignity and respect" (Dreikurs & Soltz, 1964, p. 8; cited in Clark, 1994). The mediator initially explains the purpose for the mediation which is for the individuals involved to come up with a solution to their difficulty. In addition, the mediator shares the rules for the session, which include that only one person speaks at a time, no interrupting, no name-calling, and no blaming.

## Pinpointing the Issue

The mediator assists each person in understanding the perspective (beliefs) of the other. A solution-focused emphasis on language can help in uncovering the beliefs as the mediator listens for absolutes and labels. Folger and Poole (1984, cited in Clark, 1994) recognized that premature attempts to come up with solutions are problematic, and they suggest that more time is needed in clarifying each person's needs and motivations. Mediators trained in Adlerian theory may be able to help disputants clarify their needs (such as belonging, power, revenge, superiority, inadequacy, and avoidance). An expectation for change is established when the mediator asks, "What is it you would like to change or do differently?" Mediators need to listen for exceptions that demonstrate times when the participants have done that which they state they want to change.

## Exploring the Alternatives

Creating solutions requires a trusting environment where both students can feel safe exploring alternative solutions. It usually requires those involved to think above and beyond the usual solutions that come to mind. In solution-focused terms this is to "try something different" or possibly make a 180 degree change. Through cooperation and collaboration disputants are usually able to compromise.

## Sharing Responsibility in Decision-Making

Students need to reach an agreement through shared responsibility in decision-making (Dreikurs, 1972; cited in Clark, 1994). The mediator encourages each student to seek solutions that will satisfy each participant. The plan needs to be specific, each person needs to agree on it, and the agreement needs to be written and signed. The plan should be written in a process goal format (described in Chapter Two). A scaling format can be used to see where each of the participants feels he or she is starting from, and movement can also be tracked. Metcalf (1995) utilizes a scale where she puts the goal in the middle and one disputant on either end of the continuum. For example, Brittany and Mary, two "best" friends in the sixth grade were experiencing difficulty because Mary felt that Brittany was not treating her as nicely as she used to. It seemed she was beginning to socialize with other kids and not calling Mary as often. Mary felt hurt and thought she was losing Brittany as her best friend. Brittany admitted that she enjoyed enlarging her circle of friends but still wanted to feel that she and Mary were best friends. Although Mary was somewhat jealous she agreed things would be okay if they would spend 15 minutes a night on the phone talking over their day like they always used to until recently. The process goal was "We will be spending 15 minutes a night on the phone." The scale appears below.

After the students established their process goal the counselor asked them where they felt they were in terms of the goal. Mary responded that she felt they were at a "2," while Brittany, who did not experience as much hurt, felt they were at a "3." The counselor asked them questions such as, "Mary, what will need to happen for you to feel it is a '3' ?" How will you know when it is a '5' ?"

| Mary | | | | | | | | | | | Brittany |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Process<br>Goal | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

"We will be spending 15 minutes a night on the phone."

*Figure 04-02.*

# Illustrative Case Study

## Implementing a Conflict Resolution Program

During my three years as a counselor in a school with students in grades 3-12, I (Garner) developed a comprehensive conflict resolution/peer mediation program to include all students in grades 3-8 and staff. I conducted inservice workshops for teachers and administrators twice a year. I introduced the staff to the main concepts and processes of the material that I taught in the students' classes, and they had the opportunity to practice some of the skills during the workshops, such as giving "I-messages," learning the vocabulary that the students learn in class about the different ways that people choose to handle anger, defusing anger, and recognizing the goals of misbehavior (described in Chapter Five). They viewed videotapes that the students made describing the mediation process and how it assisted them in developing positive solutions to their difficulties. For example, a fourth grader who had participated in the mediation process as both a mediator and a disputant on different occasions said, "We learned to use our mind instead of our fists to solve problems."

One activity that is effective in showing the staff the students' perspective of conflict is to show the staff members drawings that students make in a class assignment entitled, Draw-a-Picture-of-Conflict exercise. In the exercise, I give students a blank piece of paper and colored markers and ask them to draw a picture of "whatever comes to mind when you think of 'conflict'." Each student shows the picture to the class and gives a brief explanation. I mount the pictures together on poster paper, so that the class can see their conflict collage and compare different perspectives. The pictures have included depictions of the rainforest in danger, verbal disagreements, being bitten by a dog, and violent, bloody accounts of drive-by shootings and other crimes that some of the students had witnessed. One girl drew an airplane with a sad girl looking out of the window and explained that several years ago her mother, who was still a refugee in Africa, had put her on the plane to go to America to join other family members.

In the inservice, I give staff the same exercise. I then show them what students draw. It is an eye-opening experience to see how some children have experienced conflict in their lives and helps staff better understand their students.

When all teachers and staff are knowledgeable about the concepts of conflict resolution and peer mediation, the wealth of knowledge is spread throughout the school community and the process is no longer seen as one that only the counselor can facilitate. For example, I was walking down the hall and came upon a teacher facilitating two junior high students who were having an argument. Instead of immediately referring them to the principal or counselor, the teacher assisted the students while they gave each other "I-messages" and discussed how they felt about the situation. In a matter of minutes, the students and teacher were able to return to the classroom and continue with class. Since the teachers are also knowledgeable about the concepts and benefits of mediation, I have also been able to conduct mediations between students and teachers with positive results. The referrals for student/staff mediations come from students, teachers, and administrators.

I taught conflict resolution classes on a regular basis in the seventh and eighth grades. The seventh graders met with me for one period a week for 12 weeks. The eighth graders attended the class three times a week for 12 weeks. Both classes were graded and required students to acquire skills in both the concepts and processes of conflict resolution and peer mediation. At the elementary levels, teachers coordinated more flexible classes with me, based on the needs of their particular class. Teachers attended the lessons with the students, so that they could bring the concepts back to the classroom and expand on them during the week.

It is important to note that all students were trained in the concepts of conflict resolution and peer mediation. Some schools choose to train only a select group of students, but the school administrators and I believed that all students need to be exposed to these valuable concepts. Outside of the classes, students could then choose whether or not they actually wanted to participate as mediators. It is encouraging to report that some of the students who had no interest in assisting in any mediations at school have come to me and proudly told me that they were able to help others, such as family members and friends, to resolve conflicts.

Conflict resolution concepts can easily be infused into other guidance curricula, such as career awareness classes and decision-making lessons. In both of these areas, students will need to be able to resolve conflicts peacefully in the world of work and learning to resolve conflict is a form of making decisions.

Referrals requesting to have a mediation session come from all sources when the entire school community is involved. Students, teachers, administrators and parents can formally complete a mediation request form, (see page 98 of Chapter Six) or the interested parties can verbally inform the counselor of their request. The people requesting the mediation are either referring themselves and another person for a session or are indicating that they believe two other individuals could benefit from it. In some cases, the disputing individuals do not need a mediator to resolve their conflicts. When a counselor determines that the two disputants could benefit from a mediation, a formal session is arranged. In my situation, either I or one of the trained students acted as a mediator.

A mediation is usually conducted at a large table, with the disputants sitting at each end and the mediator in the middle. When student mediators are used, they work in teams of two. The following description of the mediation process views mediation in a solution-focused perspective. The mediators begin by explaining the purpose of a mediation, including the expectation that the process will be focused on finding solutions to the conflict. Each disputant is asked to agree to the following ground rules, which continue to set the tone of the session: no name-calling or put-downs, agree to tell the truth, let one person talk at a time, speak only to the mediator until directed to speak to the disputant, and work hard to find a solution.

Each disputant is then allowed time to explain his or her side of the story, while the other disputant must be a "good listener," as the listener must then summarize what the speaker said. A solution-focused counselor will be listening to the beliefs, labels, and absolutes that the speaker is using. The "good listener" component can be seen in terms of polyocularity, as the listening disputant has a chance to tune in to the other's point of view.

After each disputant has a chance to be a speaker and a "good listener," the mediator will ask each disputant to describe some exceptions, those times when the disputants are getting along. With these examples of positive situations in mind, the mediator facilitates the disputants in brainstorming, where the disputants list as many points as possible that they would be willing to change or do differently. From this list of possible items, the disputants agree on one or two of the items that would resolve the conflict.

In this agreement phase, the disputants state their decisions to make changes or do things differently in the process goal form of "I will be... (+ an action verb)." This agreement has an element of polyocularity, as both parties are now aware of each other's views and work interdependently to create the agreement, even though each disputant may be agreeing to something different.

## *Mediation Scenario*

Below is an actual mediation in which I (Garner) was involved. The mediation scenario is described along with a clarification of the process.

A third grade teacher referred two boys, Abraham and Curtis, to counseling because "they are constantly at each other, and their fighting causes disturbances in class, at lunch, and at recess." [Notice the teacher's belief that the students are fighting, and her use of the absolute of 'constantly.']

Both students agreed to come to me for a mediation. They were excited, because I told them that they would be the first third graders to participate in a mediation, as it was September and the third grade had not yet been taught the process. I framed what we were about to do by saying, "Your teacher believes that you both are able to be more successful at school, and maybe if we sat down and talked about what you both might like to change or do differently, you could make changes happen."

After each boy agreed to the ground rules (to work hard to find a solution; let one person talk at a time; no name-calling or put-downs; agree to tell the truth; speak only to the mediator until directed to speak to the disputant), each boy had a chance to tell his side of the story. Abraham, a boy who is small for his age, said, "The teacher says we're just like 'cat and mouse.' He's the cat because he's bigger, and I'm tired of being the mouse. I grew up with three sisters, and when I'm here at school I want to be part of the boys' games. But Curtis bullies me when I come near him and pushes me and yells at me." [An initial hypothesis is that Abraham's size and feeling that he is surrounded by women at home makes him desperate for the company of boys at school. The teacher's use of the label "cat and mouse" might exacerbate the situation by calling attention to his size in the inferior description of being a mouse (as Abraham even comments that he is "tired of being the mouse") and implying that he and the other boy cannot get along.]

Curtis summarized what Abraham said and then gave his side of the story: "At home it's just me and my mom, so I know what it's like to be around women all the time too. But I'm an only child, and I'm not used to people being all over me all the time. I like Abraham, but he's always buzzing around me like a little fly and bugging me. He follows me everywhere, so I get mad. I know I'm bigger than the other boys, so I get in trouble because it looks like I'm a bully." Notice that Curtis was a good listener - he linked to Abraham on the issues of size, growing up with women, and dealing with siblings - although their viewpoints are different. This sense of polyocularity - of both boys looking at the same situation from their unique perspectives and learning from each other - will help them discover a solution. Notice the use of language: the behavior that Abraham describes of how he wants "to be part of the boys' games,' Curtis sees as "he's always buzzing around me like a little fly and bugging me."

I asked the boys, "I bet there are times when the two of you are actually getting along, when you're both just third graders and not "cat and mouse." Tell me about a time when you both get along." ( I am looking for an exception and getting them ready to brainstorm and decide on a solution.)

Both boys agreed that when they talk about what they are going to do together, that they seem to get along. Otherwise, Curtis feels that Abraham is trailing after him and becomes impatient, and Abraham feels that he is being abandoned and pursues him even more.

During the brainstorming part, Abraham said that he could ask Curtis once or twice if he wants to play, and to not follow him around and pester him to make him say "yes." Curtis said that he could be more patient with Abraham and let him know if he did not want to play with Abraham, instead of just walking away or bullying him.

The boys used their ideas from the brainstorming in their solution. They each wrote a process goal:

Abraham: "I will be asking Curtis if he wants to play instead of following him around, and if he says 'no,' I will do something else."

Curtis: "I will be letting Abraham know if I want to play with him when he asks, instead of walking away or getting angry with him."

We concluded the mediation by agreeing on a time to meet the following week. In the follow-up meeting I used scaling to find out how they were each doing.

This type of a conflict resolution program is an

## Conclusion

example of a structured program that is available to all students and serves as an integral component of a counseling curriculum. Although there are numerous models that use a variety of terminology, we propose a model that combines solution-focused and Adlerian theories. This one approach, which emphasizes social interest, is based on four principles: establishing mutual respect, pinpointing the issue, exploring alternatives, and sharing responsibility in the decision making.

NOTEBOOK

## Mediation Process

(Chapter 4)

**Mediator's Outline**

**Purpose:**
to provide guidelines for integrating solution-focused/Adlerian principles into the mediation process.
*Note: These guidelines do not take the place of training in conflict resolution/mediation. Implementing a conflict resolution program into the curriculum requires that counselors receive training in inservicing the entire staff and educating the mediators.*

**Materials needed:**

- mediation is usually conducted at a large table,
  with the disputants sitting at each end and the mediator in the middle
- blank paper
- pens or pencils

**Procedure:**

1. **Explain the purpose of a mediation, including the expectation that the process will be focused on finding solutions to the conflict.**

2. **Establish mutual respect by asking each disputant to agree to the following ground rules:**
   A. No name-calling or put-downs.
   B. Agree to tell the truth.
   C. Let one person talk at a time.
   D. Speak only to the mediator until directed to speak to the disputant.
   E. Work hard to find a solution.

3. **Direct each disputant to explain his or her side of the story, while the other disputant must be a "good listener."**

4. **Direct the listener to summarize what the speaker says.** (A solution-focused counselor will be listening to the beliefs, labels, and absolutes that the speaker is using.)

5. **Ask each disputant to describe some exceptions, those times when the disputants are getting along.**

6. **Facilitate the disputants in brainstorming one or two items that would resolve the conflict by:**
   A. Encouraging disputants to keep the exceptional times in mind.
   B. Brainstorming and listing what they would be willing to change or do differently.
   C. Choosing one or two items that would resolve the conflict.

7. **Facilitate the disputants in their decisions to make changes or do things differently by:**
   A. Encouraging disputants to state their decisions to make changes or do things differently in the process goal form of "I will be... (+ an action verb)."
   B. Encouraging both parties to be aware of each other's views and work interdependently to create the agreement.
   C. Setting a time for a follow-up meeting.

| Solution-focused counseling | Adlerian counseling |
|---|---|
| miracle question | "Crucial Cs" |
| process goals | early recollections |
| solutions | goals of misbehavior |
|  | "the question" |

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# CHAPTER

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## Individual Planning

*As Will closed out the school year he was pleasantly surprised how smoothly the year went even though he had been the counselor for the seniors. Four years ago, when his district went to a comprehensive developmental counseling program, the high school counseling department decided to switch from assigning caseloads by alphabet to designating by grade levels. He felt lucky that in the first year of transition he was the ninth grade counselor and not assigned to the dreaded tasks that the senior class counselor faced with all the responsibilities of post-secondary plans which included recommendations and financial aid information. But he had just experienced the senior year, and it was not that bad. He felt that the comprehensive developmental plan facilitated the senior experience since much of the planning was done over a span of four years. The individual planning sessions he scheduled with each of his nearly 300 students and parents during the students' junior year was certainly time-consuming, but they greatly aided the process in the senior year. He looked forward to the upcoming summer vacation and was excited about the prospect of starting over with a whole new group of ninth graders in the fall. He had met them in small groups when the middle school counselor brought them over for orientation sessions earlier in the spring.*

## Introduction

Individual Planning provides all students with counseling activities to guide them in developing and implementing their personal-social, educational, and career goals and plans on a continual and systematic basis beginning early in the elementary school years (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994). Gysbers and Henderson speak of life career plans in terms of both processes and instruments. As processes, student plans emerge as a result of the guidance curriculum (i.e., self-awareness units, decision-making skills) and the individual planning that takes place. The plans are laid out in terms of short- and long- range goal-setting, decision-making, and planning activities. While awareness activities and skill building form the foundation in the elementary years, planning for high school course selection and graduation requirements initially occur in the middle school years. In the high school years, those plans developed in the middle school grades are updated to reflect changing personal-social, educational, and career goals. Individual Planning is carried out individually with students or with groups of students focusing on individual planning. The group sessions are seen as the most time-effective, although individual attention is warranted at times. Classroom curriculum continues to support individual planning with lessons on topics such as decision-making, organizational skills, and study skills.

As instruments, life career plans provide a structured way for students to gather and organize personal-social, educational, and occupational information. "As instruments, plans are not tracks to be plotted and followed routinely; they are instead, blueprints for life quests" (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994, p. 89).

Examples of Individual Planning activities related to personal-social planning generally include:

- Assisting students in recognizing their strengths and weaknesses
- Assisting students in identifying their interests and values
- Administering and interpreting self-appraisal instruments
- Assisting students in feeling socially connected in the school environment
- Student selection of extra-curricular activities

Examples of Individual Planning activities related to educational planning generally include:

- Kindergarten screening
- Student registration
- New student/parent orientation
- Assisting students in recognizing their educational abilities
- Assisting students in course selection and scheduling
- Post-secondary planning
- College application and financial aid assistance
- Advisement regarding report cards, progress reports, class rank, and credits
- Disseminating and interpreting of standardized test results
- Assessing students' learning style
- Informing students of awards and scholarships
- Planning foreign exchange opportunities
- Student record up-keep
- Assisting students transferring out of school

Examples of Individual Planning activities related to career planning include:

- Assisting students in recognizing their career interests and abilities
- Career planning
- Parent conferencing (of a regular nature such as routine conferences with parents of all juniors about post-secondary plans)
- Placement in work settings or additional educational training
- Administering routine interest inventories and occupational scales

## Individual Student Plans

According to Gysbers and Henderson (1994) student plans come in a variety of formats. The most common type is the traditional four-year high school plan which emphasizes course selection, graduation requirements, and post-secondary planning. Other planning formats are more thorough and include students' interests and strengths. Get-A-Life Portfolio Program (American School Counselor Association, 1997 ) is an example of such a planner. Portfolios, which are gaining in popularity, are even more comprehensive. In the portfolio, students record their education and training, personal and work experiences, and any related skills they have gained. Students also indicate their interests, attitudes, personal traits, and social/leisure activities. In addition, students may include examples of their school work that demonstrate their abilities. The career passport, another type of format, is less detailed than the portfolio and emphasizes information related to job applications and interviews (Gysbers & Moore, 1987).

## Implementing Individual Planning

There are a variety of techniques for implementing individual planning. The most common way is through the traditional caseload structure where school counselors are responsible for all of the students assigned to them. This can be an arduous task, based on the large numbers of students counselors are currently serving. While at the elementary level school counselors may be assigned to one or more buildings, at the middle and high school levels there is no one best way for assigning caseloads. Schools where there are enough counselors to assign one counselor per grade may use that structure, while in other schools students may be assigned to counselors alphabetically. In either case, counselors often follow the same students throughout the years at their level for continuity.

Some schools have gone to mentoring programs, such as using homeroom faculty to serve as advisors to the students assigned to them. Gysbers and Henderson (1994) recommend that high school staff provide individual planning for students using the Individual Advisory System (IAS). In such a system each student is assigned to an adult, which necessitates that all teachers, counselors, administrators, and specialists act as advisors to approximately 15 to 20 students. The philosophy behind the system is that faculty, students, and parents will be more satisfied if every student is able to relate one-on-one with at least one adult. The advisor's role involves program planning, parent contact, and personal development. In schools with IAS the counselors serve as prime resources for advisors and students. While counselors continue to fulfill many of the traditional roles, such as crisis counseling, they are also able to deliver a high level of professional services. For a thorough discussion of the IAS, counselors are referred to Gysbers and Henderson.

We caution that school staff carry out only those responsibilities for which they are trained. In schools where advisement is shared across the faculty and staff, it is appropriate for counselors to provide the necessary training. Below we describe an individual planning model based on student characteristics that are necessary for their success. It is important that counselors train the entire staff in these important characteristics so that they all speak the same language. It is important that school staff advise in only those areas in which they are prepared, and that staff members readily refer students to the counselor as necessary.

## Individual Planning Using the "Crucial Cs"

Adults need to help students feel a **connection** with others, the **capability** to succeed, **counting** among others, and the **courage** to face challenges. These "Crucial Cs," as developed by Bettner and Lew (1995, 1996a, 1996b), are based on Adlerian principles and describe the necessary foundation that children need in order to successfully meet life's challenges. Children who are discouraged about their ability to connect, feel capable, and count "draw wrong conclusions and choose mistaken ways in which to find their place" (Dreikurs & Soltz, 1964, p. 15). Bettner and Lew describe these inappropriate strategies which Dreikurs referred to as "the mistaken goals of behavior" or goals of misbehavior, as symptoms of their wrong conclusions. Bettner and Lew indicate that a child's misbehavior is an inappropriate solution to a problem that the child is experiencing. A chart developed by Bettner and Lew entitled, "The Crucial Cs and Rudolf Dreikurs' Short-Range Goals of Misbehavior" is found on page 75. By understanding which goal of misbehavior the child is displaying the adult can better understand the child's source of discouragement. With this knowledge the adult will have a direction to take in finding constructive solutions. At times it is difficult for adults to determine the goal of misbehavior. When that occurs the adult can gain a better understanding by realizing which feelings the behavior evokes in them. These feelings help indicate the source of the misbehavior. The chart summarizes this information.

Adults need to help children find alternative, constructive solutions. Since individual planning provides all students with counseling activities to guide them in their development, school personnel can use the "Crucial Cs" as a gauge in helping students in their personal-social development. It is important that counselors train all school personnel in the "Crucial Cs" so that staff members better understand students' needs. In addition, we provide a referral form (in Chapter Six) that requests the referring staff member to indicate the missing "Crucial C."

When assessing a referral or working with a student, counselors can ask themselves, "Is this student feeling connected, capable, that he or she counts, and courageous?" When the response is "no," the counselor can determine if the area of discouragement should be handled through: the classroom curriculum (as described in Chapter Three); individual counseling (described in Chapter

Six); a systemic change (as described in Chapter Nine); or in individual planning. The following scenario and the possible alternatives make a distinction between these interventions.

In one of our trainings, a counselor from a small Catholic elementary school described a new student, a sixth grade boy, who felt isolated because he had little in common with the other ten boys in his class. While his classmates enjoyed talking about sports, he preferred topics such as computers and science fiction. In talking with him, the counselor learned that he had several friends in his neighborhood who went to public school and several friends in scouts. If she had assessed that the boy needed to learn social skills, then perhaps she would have suggested individual or group counseling with that end in mind. If she had determined that school policies made it difficult for new students to feel connected, she may have suggested a systemic change. In choosing which intervention to use with him, she looked at what he was already doing to feel connected in other areas of his life. It appeared that he used his interests to get involved with others. Through individual planning, she helped the student assess which extra-curricular activities would help him feel more connected to the school. (See Individual Planning - Example 1, p. 78.) If the student had mentioned that he wanted to be more interested and active in sports but was fearful about getting involved, the counselor could have identified courage as his missing Crucial C. (See Individual Planning - Example 2, p. 79.)

## Connection

Adler described human beings as social animals with a basic need of belonging. In individual planning, counselors need to ask themselves if the child is connecting in a constructive way. Those who connect constructively feel secure, are able to reach out to others, can make friends, and are able to cooperate. Those who do not connect constructively may feel isolated, be susceptible to peer pressure, and conclude that negative attention is better than no attention at all (Bettner & Lew, 1995, 1996a, 1996b). A child may discover that it feels good to gain attention and acquire the mistaken belief that attention-getting is the only way to feel connected. A common outcome is that the student demands undue attention.

Through individual planning the counselor can help students feel more connected by helping them:

- evaluate their interests and how they can use them to become involved with others (extra-curricular activities).
- assess their strengths and how they can utilize them to cooperate with others (working on projects together, listening to friends).
- choose friends who have common interests and values.
- determine appropriate ways they can gain recognition.
- discover how they have felt connected to others in the past and how they can use those solutions presently.
- realize that when they want a person's undivided attention that they must approach the individual at an appropriate time.
- realize that by reaching out to others (by their actions or by expressing their thoughts and feelings) that they are likely to build more connections.

## Capability

From early childhood on, individuals struggle to overcome their inferior feelings (Ansbacher, 1956). For some people, inferior feelings challenge them to develop their capabilities in useful ways, while for others, inferiority feelings discourage the individual and diminish his or her social interest. In individual planning, counselors need to ask themselves if the child is developing his or her capabilities and using them in responsible and respectful ways. Those who feel capable also feel competent, are self-reliant, have self-discipline, and are responsible. Those who do not believe in their capability feel inadequate, may be dependent on others and may seek power by controlling others and/or being defiant (Bettner & Lew, 1995, 1996a, 1996b). When children feel inferior to others, they may adopt the mistaken belief that they are only capable when they are more powerful than others.

Through individual planning the counselor can help students feel more capable by encouraging them to:

- appreciate their own abilities rather than compare themselves with others.
- use their strengths in ways that contribute to others.
- set realistic process goals (I will be more friendly in homeroom by talking with people around me instead of burying myself in a book).
- set small achievable "baby steps" if necessary (making one new friend this semester).
- gradually make more important decisions (deciding on high school courses prior to choosing a college major).
- think about successes that they had and analyze what they did right.
- think about the learning experience involved when making a mistake and ask themselves what they will do differently the next time.
- focus on improvements.

## Feeling Counted

The striving for significance is a movement toward the fulfillment of a unique identity, the belief that one counts (Dinkmeyer et al., 1987). Individuals want to feel that their existence matters. In individual planning, counselors need to ask themselves if the child believes he or she counts. Students who feel they count also feel valuable, that they make a difference, and that they can contribute constructively. Those students who do not believe that they count feel insignificant and hurt, and may seek revenge for their hurt feelings (Bettner & Lew, 1995, 1996a, 1996b). When children feel inferior to others, they may adopt the mistaken belief that they only count when seeking revenge and hurting others like they have been hurt.

Through individual planning the counselor can help students feel that they count by encouraging them to:

- brainstorm positive characteristics that they possess.
- assess their strengths and how they can utilize them to contribute to others (reading to younger students, working on committees of clubs).
- be someone upon whom others can depend.
- set realistic process goals to work on ways to cool off when angered.
- set realistic process goals to work on the relationship which is causing them pain.

## Courage

"Courage refers to the willingness to take a chance, to engage in risk-taking behavior" (Mosak, 1979, p. 47). Dreikurs often said that if children were able to have only one quality in life, courage would be the most necessary. In individual planning, counselors need to ask themselves if the child has the courage to handle what comes his or her way. Students who have courage feel equal, confident, and hopeful. They are resilient and can face challenges. Those students who do not have courage feel inferior, hopeless, and discouraged. They are not able to overcome fear, they may give up or use avoidance (Bettner & Lew, 1995, 1996a, 1996b). When children lack courage their mistaken beliefs are that they cannot do anything right so there is no use in trying, and that if they do not try then they will not risk failing.

Through individual planning the counselor can help encourage students to:

- discover exceptions—times when they were fearful but attempted something new anyway.
- attempt small changes through process goals.
- recognize times they overcame a fear.
- appreciate small changes they have made.
- use solutions that have worked for them in the past in a new situation.
- use positive self-talk to encourage themselves through a new task.
- set realistic process goals to work on the relationship which is causing them pain.

## When a Student Is Missing a "Crucial C:"

1. The counselor identifies the missing "Crucial C."
2. The counselor uses strategies from the lists on individual planning using the "Crucial Cs" (pages 63) to help the student with solutions.
3. The counselor asks the student what it is he or she would like to change or do differently.
4. The counselor listens for the student's belief.
5. The student commits to the plans by:
   A. writing out the process goal related to the specific "Crucial C."
   B. carrying out the process goal.
6. The counselor and student meet for follow-up as necessary.

## Summary of Individual Planning Using the "Crucial Cs"

In individual planning sessions, when counselors identify that a student is missing a "Crucial C," the counselor identifies the missing "Crucial C" and uses strategies such as those mentioned above to help the student with solutions. The "Crucial Cs" are summarized in a chart, developed by Bettner and Lew (1995, 1996a) and found on page 76. While the above lists contain strategies for counselors to use in helping the student attain the "Crucial Cs," it is the student's responsibility to commit to the plans and carry them out. Together the counselor and student develop an individual plan (page 77) based on the "Crucial Cs." Similar to the other solution-focused interventions, the counselor asks the student what he or she would like to change. Based on the beliefs that the counselor hears, the counselor helps the student identify the "Crucial C" that is missing and a process goal. Counselors can either teach students about the "Crucial Cs" in individual sessions or more time effectively through classroom guidance lessons. The counselor follows up to check on the student's progress. On page 78 is a mock example of a form completed by the boy at the Catholic school who felt isolated. On the following page is a blank form for counselors to copy and use with their students.

# Educational and Career Planning

A major emphasis of individual planning is educational and career planning. As mentioned previously, in a comprehensive developmental counseling program, educational and career planning occurs throughout the students' entire years of schooling, kindergarten through twelfth grade. In the elementary years, the counseling curriculum plays the largest part in preparing students for their future educational and career plans, while individual attention in this area intensifies in the high school years. Through the comprehensive program, students become aware of educational and career information and requirements as well as their personal interests, abilities, and aptitudes. Since most counselors are trained in career education and traditional appraisal methods to assess students' interests and abilities, in this section we discuss innovative approaches, some of which are brief in nature, and some attributed to Adler.

## The "Career Question"

Adler often addressed educational and career issues throughout his works, many of which are still relevant today. School-to-work is a "hot" topic in the 1990's, even though Adler (1931/1992) spoke of it in the 1930's in his book, What Life Could Mean to You: "We may improve the situation [unemployment] by further development of training schools, technical schools and adult education" (p. 208). Adler referred to the need to start career education early in life (just as a comprehensive developmental counseling program does) when he said, "A child's development is much simpler if he knows from childhood which career he would like to take up later in life" (p. 203).

Adler (1931/1992) commented that we often ask students what they want to be when they grow up, but unfortunately we do not fully understand their answer or recognize the wealth of information it provides:

> Their answers aren't usually clearly considered, however, and when they say that they want to be aeroplane pilots or engine drivers they do not know why they are choosing these occupations. It is our task to recognize the underlying motives, to see the direction their efforts are tending towards, to find out what is pushing them forward, what kind of goal they have and how they feel they can bring it about. The answer they give to our question about a future career shows us only one kind of occupation that seems to them to represent superiority; but from this occupation we can also identify other opportunities for helping them to reach their goal. (p. 203-204)

Asking children the "career question," what they want to be, offers adults a view of how the child would like things to be, just as in the solution-focused technique of the "miracle question" described in Chapter Two. Just as we cautioned in that discussion—not to treat the response as the desired goal — Adler too warned us to look beyond the question. In Chapter Two we suggested that Adlerians understand the answer to the miracle question as something the individual fears and wants to avoid. In a similar light, students may share their fears of inferiority through their responses. For example, a boy who says he wants to be a professional basketball player when he grows up, may be choosing a visible and highly regarded profession (in this society) as a way of expressing his fear that he may not have any recognition when he grows up. It is important for counselors to help students understand their underlying belief and ways they can make things happen in their lives.

In this brief solution-focused/Adlerian dialogue, the counselor recognized some of the student's beliefs and moved easily into solution-oriented talk:

Counselor: What would you like to be when you grow up?
Student: I really want to be a professional basketball player. That would be so cool.
Counselor: What's so cool about it?
Student: You get endorsements and you get to go everywhere and everyone loves you—except the guys on the other team.
Counselor: It's pretty important for you to be recognized and liked.
Student: Well, yeah.
Counselor: What would happen if you ended up in a career that wasn't so glamourous?
Student: That would be so boring.
Counselor: So you're afraid if it isn't a high profile position that you'd be bored.
Student: Yeah. I'd be nothin'.
Counselor: What will you be doing to make sure you are something?

## Early Recollections

Early recollections are a means that Adlerian counselors use to learn about an individual's lifestyle. Early recollections are moments from early childhood that a person chooses to remember from all the possible life experiences. They reveal a person's current style of life—a unique way of acting, thinking, feeling, and responding to self and the environment. They provide valuable clues about the individual's mistaken beliefs and goals of behavior (Borden, 1982). As individuals change, their perceptions change as well, and their early recollections are altered to reflect their present beliefs. At times, the events recalled in the early recollection have not even occurred, but the important point is that the early recollections reflect how one approaches life. An example from Adler's own life illustrates how early recollections reflect an individual's approach to life, even if at times the events are inaccurate. One of Adler's early recollections is of walking the long way to school so that he did not have to traverse the "dreaded cemetery." Finally, one day he tired of going around the cemetery and forced himself to go through the cemetery. Ironically, on a return visit to his childhood neighborhood, Adler learned that there had been no cemetery. Revealed in this early recollection is Adler's approach to life: he did not allow obstacles to get in his way; he met the challenges that came his way.

Although Adlerians vary in their procedures for assessing early recollections, they share the basic approach. The general steps in assessing early recollections involve:

1. Counselors ask individuals their earliest memories—usually before the age of 8 or 10. (Counselors will usually ask individuals to come up with between three and seven early memories).
2. Counselors explain that the memory must be of a specific event—not a report of something that the individual remembers that he or she used to do. Counselors ask individuals to report the memory in as much detail as possible. When working with children, it is particularly helpful to ask them to describe the memory as if it were being played back on a VCR.
3. Counselors ask individuals about the most vivid part of the memory. Again, with children it is helpful to ask them if they had taken a snapshot of the most vivid part of the memory, what would the frame look like?
4. Counselors usually ask individuals how they were feeling during the most vivid moment.
5. Some counselors ask individuals if they could change any part of the memory, what they would change.
6. After all the information is gathered, counselors look for themes in the early recollections. They assess such characteristics as: the feeling tone of the memories, whether or not the individual is in the memories, if there are other people in the memory, how the individual relates to others in the memories, how the individual relates to authority (or if the individual is the one in control in the memories), and the presence of caring in the memory (Dewey, 1978). In addition, Powers and Griffith (1987) recommend that counselors look for themes such as: the rules that emerge regarding gender, the activity level in the memory, and the amount of movement towards goals that occurs.
7. Based on the themes from the early recollections, the counselor gains an understanding of the individual's approach to life, private logic, and ways of gaining significance.

The Adlerian technique of early recollections can be used in solution-focused counseling as a means for counselors to identify resources and strengths that a student might draw upon to handle the current situation.

## *Using Early Recollections to Establish Process Goals in Career Planning*

Counselors can ask individuals their early recollections in general, or in the event counselors want to assess a specific area of concern, they can ask about the early recollections regarding that issue. For example, if a student experiences concerns about trust, the counselor can ask the student for his or her earliest memories related to trust. Limited research has been done in the area of early recollections and careers, although Adler (1931/1992) pointed out the worthiness of using early memories in vocational counseling:

> In vocational guidance, first memories should be considered very carefully. If in a child's first memories we see an interest in visual things, we can conclude that he will be more suited to an occupation in which he can use his eyes. A child might mention impressions of someone talking to him, of the sound of the wind or of a bell ringing. We could recognize that he is an acoustic type and we can guess that he might be suited for some profession connected with music. In other recollections we can see impressions of movement. There are individuals who need more activity; perhaps they would be interested in occupations demanding manual labour or travel. (p. 205)

Carson (1994) cited the following authors: Manaster and Corsini (1982), McFarland (1988), and Watkins (1984, 1992a, 1992b) who suggested that early memories represent valuable windows into those personality aspects that help determine the individual's choice of and quality of adjustment to one's occupation. The results of several studies that they reviewed indicated that individuals do appear to vary in their early recollections between occupational groups. They also found that among closely related fields, there are identified differences across specialties as well.

Premo (1995) used early recollections as they related to work tasks in early life to help determine career positions, by asking engineers their earliest memories of least and most preferred chores. He stated that when working with adults, counselors can ask them early memories about early jobs as well. In his study, he found that as youngsters, the engineers who specialized in sales tended to prefer chores that were intangible (abstract), while engineers who worked in technical areas preferred tangible (concrete) tasks in their youth. In a presentation, Premo (1995) shared a number of examples from his study. Below, three memories of one engineer in sales are shared, as well as three memories of one of the engineers in a technical area, specifically mechanical engineering. They are representative of the memories shared in the study:

**Sales-ER1:** (The individual was asked to share an early memory about a most preferred chore or early job.)

I was working full-time at McDonald's as a counter person when I was around 16. The hamburgers were fifteen cents each and Cokes were twenty-five cents each at the time. There were two of us working side by side at the counter that day. Prior to the lunch crowd coming in we talked about bringing in $200 over the counter within one hour. We agreed to this and actually brought in $205 in one hour and our boss was amazed and very happy. It was the first time anyone had done this at McDonald's and it really felt great.

Vivid Moment: (The individual was asked the most vivid moment of the memory.)

When we were done we went out back together and said to each that was fun and great while smoking.

Change?: (The individual was asked what he would have liked to have changed about the memory.)

Nothing.

**Sales-ER2:** (The individual was asked to share an early memory about a least preferred chore or early job.)

My brother and I are doing the dishes, I'm around 14. I was into wrestling real big at the time. Anyway, my brother popped me with his towel suddenly, so I body slammed him to the ground. He then came back and tried to hit me with an aluminum pot, so I slammed him again and held him down until he said Uncle.

Vivid Moment: (The individual was asked the most vivid moment of the memory.)

My brother ducking behind the chair trying to get away from me after he hit me with the pot.

Change?: (The individual was asked what he would have liked to have changed about the memory.)

I wouldn't have him hurt him at all.

**Sales-ER3:** (The individual was asked to share one additional memory of his choice about a most preferred chore or early job.)

I was about 13 and all my buddies wanted me to go play baseball with them. My mother made me weed the garden instead and I hated this. I couldn't play with my buddies because I had to do the God-damned garden, and it was big and I had to do it all by myself, and just right, or I would have to do it all over again.

Vivid Moment: (The individual was asked the most vivid moment of the memory.)

I had to go do it again because it wasn't good enough for her.

Change?: (The individual was asked what he would have liked to have changed about the memory.)

I would not have done the weeding and gone to play baseball with my buddies.

**ME/Engineer-ER1:** (The individual was asked to share an early memory about a most preferred chore or early job.)

At the same place around the same time, I had a fun experience working on the electronics system of a boat. The mechanic asked me to give him a hand troubleshooting the electrical system. We worked on it for several hours and were not getting anywhere. I told the mechanic I was a ham electronics operator at school and asked him if I could try troubleshooting for awhile by myself. So I found some faulty wiring and rewired the boat owner's old radar and set up a better grounding plane. When I finished it, it worked and also allowed me to move from a mechanics helper to an electronics technician and a certified helper.

Vivid Moment: (The individual was asked the most vivid moment of the memory.)

When the mechanic said for me to give it a try and I ended up fixing it.

Change?: (The individual was asked what he would have liked to have changed about the memory.)

I should have spoken up earlier instead of waiting several hours. I wish I wasn't so timid.

**ME/Engineer-ER2:** (The individual was asked to share an early memory about a least preferred chore or early job.)

I was 17 working at a boatyard helping the mechanic remove an engine from an eighteen foot boat. I was operating the engine hoist and was strapping the hoist onto the engine with these clamps in order to do a tune-up on the engine. I did the tune up and was putting the engine in the test tank and while doing so, I hit the lever that released the clamp on the hoist by accident and I was hit by the engine clamp. This knocked me out and broke my jaw.

Vivid Moment: (The individual was asked the most vivid moment of the memory.)

When I got hit by the clamp of the motor hoist.

Change?: (The individual was asked what he would have liked to have changed about the memory.)

Not hitting that release button.

**ME/Engineer-ER3:** (The individual was asked to share one additional memory of his choice about a most preferred chore or early job.)

When I was 17 I tried something else. I worked at a Plastic Mold Injection factory where they made computer reeds for the old card punches. I set the controller and set up the program and started making these reeds. Halfway through the batch the computer developed a problem and I stopped the machine but didn't shut off the preheat for the plastic reeds. What happened started a catalyst with the heated plastic and a fire started and gas developed, then the fire department was called out to put the fire out.

Vivid Moment: (The individual was asked the most vivid moment of the memory.)

When we figured out the pre-heater wasn't shut off.

Change?: (The individual was asked what he would have liked to have changed about the memory.)

I would have checked out the system more thoroughly.

In a brief analysis of the early recollections between the engineer in sales and the mechanical engineer, some of the following contrasts are noted, using some of the characteristics described above by Dewey (1978) and Powers and Griffith (1987). While the engineer in sales mentioned other persons throughout his recollections (his brother, his co-worker, lunch crowd, boss, baseball buddies, and mother), the mechanical engineer mentioned only one person, the mechanic. The engineer in sales seemed to interact with others through influence and enterprise (i.e., held brother down until he said Uncle, challenged himself and his co-worker to bring in over $200) while the mechanical engineer's involvement with the only person he mentioned concerned concrete skills. It is clear that the sales engineer enjoyed activities that involved other people, but he detested work that he had to do alone and was routine and monotonous (weeding the garden). The mechanical engineer seemed to enjoy working solely, and he gained pleasure in analyzing and solving difficult problems. While the engineer in sales regarded authority as someone to please or disappoint (his boss and his mom), the mechanical engineer seemed to have a more egalitarian relationship with the mechanic with whom he worked as a teen. We can make some hypotheses about how the engineer in sales perceives gender roles, but we would need to dialogue with him before forming any conclusions. We do know that he resents his mother making him weed the garden, and he is angry that she makes him redo it. He was proud that he pleased his boss at McDonald's. In the event we discovered that his boss was a male, with additional supporting evidence, we might be able to conclude that he perceives "Men appreciate ingenuity while women are hard to please."

Although the research suggests that early recollections may be a valuable tool to use in career counseling, there is little evidence that school counselors are using this innovative technique. On page 86 is a form for students to record their early recollections related to their preferred chores at home. This form follows Premo's approach in that it asks for three early memories: one memory of a chore that the students preferred, one memory of a chore that the students liked least, and one additional memory of their choice related to a chore. While counselors look for themes in the early recollections, it is important to check out the themes with the student. For example, if the engineer above who went into sales had stated his early recollections when he was a senior in high school, the counselor might have said, "From your memories it appears that working with people is important to you, does that sound accurate?" After the counselor and student discuss the characteristics that came out as important in the early recollections, the student makes a process goal related to career planning. It is also seems apparent from the early recollections that the sales engineer likes to be persuasive. His process goal might be: "I will be attending next week's career fair and talking with the representatives about careers that will allow me to work with people and use my skills in persuasion."

## *Using Early Recollections to Create Solutions in Educational Planning*

Early recollections can also be utilized in educational planning. Early recollections can give an idea of a person's preferred learning style. In Adler's quote above, regarding early recollections and vocations, he refers to the senses with which students learn. Likewise, Adler discussed learning styles, a topic which is apropos today:

> From the first, therefore, we should find out how the child looks at the world and which sense organ has been used most and trained to the highest degree. Some children are most interested in seeing, some in listening, some in moving. Children of a visual type will be easier to interest in subjects in which they have to use their eyes, such as geography or drawing. If the teacher gives lectures, they will not listen; they are less accustomed to auditory attention. If such children have no opportunity to learn through their eyes, they will be slow learners. (p. 139-140)

In a recent research and statistics course that I (LaFountain) taught, I asked students their early recollections about their experiences with math. I used a similar format to the one Premo used with the addition that I asked them how they felt. In a related exercise, I asked them to rank order a number of learning activities we would be using in class such as: library research, cooperative groups, computer instruction, figuring out statistical problems independently, and working out problems on the chalkboard. In general, the themes that emerged regarding their approach to mathematics seem to relate to the way they ranked learning activities. For example, one student who ranked cooperative groups high on her preferred list of learning wrote:

**Student A - ER 1:** (In response to the instructions to describe an early memory that you have of math class—Algebra level or earlier— that illustrates a task or event that you enjoyed.)

It was in an elementary math class, and the students were asked to help each other understand a new concept.

I was helping my best friend.

Vivid Moment: (The individual was asked the most vivid moment of the memory.)

The moment my friend understood what I was explaining, and we were hugging.

Feeling: I felt an enormous amount of joy.

Change?: (The individual was asked what she would have liked to have changed about the memory.)

I do not think that I would want to change anything because it was a positive event.

This same student shared a blackboard memory as her worst memory. Doing blackboard work was ranked lowest on her list. Likewise, for many students who shared horrifying memories of being ridiculed in class, the majority of the experiences revolved around blackboard work.

**Student A - ER 2:** (Responding to the instructions to describe an early memory that you have of math class—Algebra level or earlier—that illustrates a task or event that you disliked.)

I was standing at the blackboard. My task was to solve a problem. My mind went blank, and everything I learned was gone, while my teacher got angry at my stupidity and ridiculed me in front of the class.

Vivid Moment: (The individual was asked the most vivid moment of the memory.)

The moment I was being embarrassed, where the teacher yelled at me, and I saw pity in one of my classmate's eyes.

Feeling: I felt frustrated, angry, embarrassed, like I was standing naked in front of the class.

Change?: (The individual was asked what she would have liked to have changed about the memory.)

I would want my teacher to stop putting me on the spot and give me a chance to get my thoughts ordered.

While memories demonstrating that through early recollections students can describe situations in which they learn best (as well as get discouraged from learning), other early recollections clearly show those senses through which a student learns best. A male student gave the following responses which clearly pointed to his preferred learning style:

**Student B - ER 1:** (In response to the instructions to describe an early memory that you have of math class—Algebra level or earlier— that illustrates a task or event that you enjoyed, this student demonstrated being a tactile learner.)

In sixth grade we were learning about geometric shapes and the teacher gave us patterns of shapes (two-dimensional) to cut out and glue into three- dimensional shapes. I remember the crisp paper that felt satiny on one side and rough on the other. No one could figure out how to do the pyramid. I was the first one to figure it out so I ran over to show the teacher. She let me walk around the room and help the other students.

Vivid Moment: (The individual was asked the most vivid moment of the memory.)

The most vivid moment is the teacher holding up my pyramid and saying to the class, "Look how Alan put together his pyramid."

Feeling: I felt excited and proud.

Change?: (The individual was asked what he would have liked to have changed about the memory.)

I wouldn't have run to tell the teacher that I had figured it out so quickly because she expected me to pick up on things quickly from then on.

Early recollections offer counselors an informal means of creating solutions for students in regard to their learning. Through early recollections, counselors can discover times when students felt successful in their education. With this information, counselors can work with teachers to recreate similar situations which optimize the success of their students. With the emphasis on adaptation in the classroom today, teachers are becoming more open to creating individualized opportunities for students. In the geometry example above, the student expressed pride in being able to create the three-dimensional pyramid from the two-dimensional shapes. In the event that this same student had difficulty in writing out proofs, perhaps the teacher could assign this student an alternate spatial-oriented activity as a better way to grasp proofs later on.

Early recollections are useful in terms of course selection and planning as well. An example is a boy in high school who recollects enjoyment in the laboratory aspect of science classes when in elementary school. He also remembers feelings of defeat in the study of facts and equations. His counselor may suggest that he take Applied Chemistry class which emphasizes labs and minimizes theory.

Study skills that have been useful in the past may be remembered through early recollections and utilized as solutions in the present. We worked with a girl who was having difficulty in her ninth grade Science and Social Studies classes. She remembered her most pleasant memory of studying in elementary school as making spelling flash cards and having her father drill her on them. She got back into the practice of making flash cards of Science and Social Studies vocabulary and had her father drill her on them.

The form on page 86 gathers students' early recollections in their academics. Directions are given on page 85 to help students discover solutions through their early recollections.

The use of early recollections as an informal assessment in the area of educational and career planning shows much promise. In addition, early recollections serve as a tool for students to use in the creation of solutions. It is recommended that educators continue to research early recollections and their use in individual planning.

## Additional Brief Interventions in Educational Planning

Post-secondary Paperwork. High school counselors are well aware of the extensive amount of paperwork they must fill out for students regarding college and technical school applications, financial aid, and letters of references. To help the seniors be organized for their postsecondary planning meetings, I (Garner) requisitioned colored, two-pocket folders. I put the student's name on the cover and a time-line of what tasks needed to be done month-by-month. When a student requested an appointment for assistance with the college application/postsecondary planning process, it was his or her responsibility to bring the folder to the appointment, with all of the necessary materials such as applications and forms. This system avoided having an appointment during which the student ransacked a bookbag for papers or came unprepared. The appointment was cancelled if the student was not prepared.

To model for the students that I was also being accountable, I had a second folder for each student that they left with me, containing any college materials that I needed to complete. I kept these folders in a file in the Counseling Office, and students knew that they could drop in whenever they saw that my door was open and that I was not working with someone, to check how their materials were coming along or to pick them up. This second folder system avoided the need for them to barrage me with anxious questions about their materials, during the anxiety-provoking senior year.

Recommendations. Counselors can more readily write recommendations when they gain information from students from which to write the references. In the middle of the junior year, counselors should distribute a form to juniors that requests basic information such as extra-curricular activities, awards, interests, future plans and goals. This completed form should be kept in the two-pocket folder for easy access by the counselor.

## Conclusion

Individual planning is a counseling component available to all students that helps them in developing and implementing their personal-social, educational, and career goals and plans on a systematic basis beginning in the elementary school years. In this chapter a variety of techniques for individual planning are discussed. One approach that we highlighted is individual planning using the "Crucial Cs" that were developed by Bettner and Lew (1995, 1996a, 1996b). The "Crucial Cs" are based on Adlerian principles and describe the necessary characteristics that children need in order to successfully meet life's challenges: Connection, Capability, Counting, and Courage. Strategies such as the "career question" and early recollections are suggested as informal means for students to create solutions in the area of educational and career planning. An early recollection captures in a single metaphor a person's approach to life across the life tasks: social, occupational/educational, and sexual. Adler (1931/1992) recognized the frustration that can be involved in career planning when he said, "There are some people who would choose any career and still never be satisfied. What they want is not a career but an easy guarantee of superiority" (p. 201).

Counselors can use the following form to assess what they are already doing in terms of individual planning. The form serves as a means for setting process goals to encourage systematic individual planning for all students in a solution-focused/Adlerian manner.

# What We Are Already Doing That Is Solution-Focused/Adlerian Individual Planning Component

1. **Check which activities:**
   - A. **you are already doing.**
   - B. **you are doing in a solution-focused way.**
   - C. **you are doing in an Adlerian way.**
2. **Brainstorm ways to adapt the activities to a solution-focused/Adlerian model.**

| Activity — Currently doing and would like to continue to do | Activity is | | To adapt it to a Solution-Focused/ Adlerian model we will be... |
|---|---|---|---|
| | SF | AD | |
| ***Personal-Social Planning*** | | | |
| Assisting students in recognizing their strengths and weaknesses | | | |
| Assisting students in identifying their interests and values | | | |
| Administering and interpreting self-appraisal instruments | | | |
| Assisting students in feeling socially connected | | | |
| Student selection of extra curricular activities | | | |
| ***Educational Planning*** | | | |
| Kindergarten screening | | | |
| Student Registration | | | |
| New student/parent orientation | | | |
| Assisting students in recognizing their educational abilities | | | |
| Assisting students in course selection and scheduling | | | |
| Post-secondary planning | | | |
| College application and financial aid assistance | | | |
| Advisement regarding report cards, and progress reports | | | |

**SF = Solution-Focused** **AD = Adlerian**

## What We Are Already Doing That Is Solution-Focused/Adlerian Individual Planning Component

1. **Check which activities:**
   - **A. you are already doing.**
   - **B. you are doing in a solution-focused way.**
   - **C. you are doing in an Adlerian way.**
2. **Brainstorm ways to adapt the activities to a solution-focused/Adlerian model.**

| Activity Currently doing and would like to continue to do | Activity is | | To adapt it to a Solution-Focused/ Adlerian model we will be... |
|---|---|---|---|
| | SF | AD | |
| ***Routine Educational Testing*** | | | |
| Dissemination and interpretation of standardized test results | | | |
| Assessing students' learning styles | | | |
| Informing students of awards and scholarships | | | |
| Planning foreign exchange programs | | | |
| Student record up-keep | | | |
| Assisting students transferring out of school | | | |
| ***Career Planning*** | | | |
| Assisting students in recognizing their career interests and abilities | | | |
| Routine parent conferencing | | | |
| Placement in work settings or additional educational training | | | |
| Administering routine interest inventories and occupational scales | | | |

**SF = Solution-Focused**

**AD = Adlerian**

## *The Crucial Cs and Rudolf Dreikurs' Short-Range Goals of Misbehavior*

Amy Lew and Betty Lou Bettner

| Child's belief | Child feels | Child's negative goal | Adult feels | Adult's impulse | Child's response to correction | Crucial Cs | CONSTRUCTIVE ALTERNATIVES | Child's belief | Child feels | Child's positive goal |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I only count when I'm being noticed | insecure<br>alienated | ATTENTION | irritated<br>annoyed | REMIND<br>What, again? | "temporarily" stops | CONNECT | Replace negative attention with positive attention.<br>Plan activities together.<br>Don't ignore the child; ignore the misbehavior.<br>Teach self-sufficiency. | I belong | secure | COOPERATION |
| My strength is in showing you that you can't make me and you can't stop me | inadequate<br>dependent<br>others are in control | POWER | angry<br>challenged | FIGHT<br>I insist that you do as I say. | misbehavior intensifies | CAPABLE | Don't try to win.<br>Give opportunity and choices so child can display power constructively.<br>Maintain friendly attitude. | I can do it | competent<br>self-control | SELF-RELIANCE |
| I knew that you were against me. No one really likes me. I'll show you how it feels. | insignificant | REVENGE<br>get back<br>get even | hurt or wants to punish | PUNISH<br>How could you do this to me? us? them?<br>I'll teach you a lesson. | wants to get even<br>makes self disliked | COUNT | Avoid anger and hurt feelings.<br>Maintain appreciation in relationship.<br>Offer chances to help.<br>Seek support and help in identifying positives.<br>(Don't give up). | I matter | significant<br>valuable | CONTRIBUTION |
| I can't do anything right so I won't try. If I don't try, my failures won't be so obvious | inferior<br>useless<br>hopeless | AVOIDANCE<br>display of inadequacy | despair<br>I give up.<br>hopeless | GIVE UP<br>It's no use | passive<br>no change<br>more hopeless<br>displays inadequacies | COURAGE | Notice only strengths and ignore the negative.<br>Set up steady exposure to manageable tasks that have a guarantee of success.<br>No criticism. | I can handle what comes | hopeful<br>willing to try | RESILIENCY |

**REMEMBER:** Misbehavior is a symptom of the child's discouragement about being able to feel the Crucial Cs. Use encouragement and training through natural and logical consequences. Consider and agree on choices together.

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# THE CRUCIAL Cs

Amy Lew, Ph.D., & Betty Lou Bettner, Ph.D.

| The child who **does not** have the Crucial Cs – | | The child who **has** the Crucial Cs – |
|---|---|---|
| I feel **insecure, isolated**<br>I'm more susceptible to peer pressure<br>I seek **attention** | **CONNECT**<br>I believe<br>**I belong** | I feel **secure**<br>I can reach out<br>I can make friends<br>I **cooperate** |
| I feel **inadequate**<br>I try to control others or show "you can't make me!"<br>I become dependent<br>I seek **power** | **CAPABLE**<br>I believe<br>**I can do it** | I feel **competent**<br>I have self-control and self-discipline<br>I assume responsibility<br>I am **self-reliant** |
| I feel **insignificant** and hurt<br>I may try to hurt back<br>I seek **revenge** | **COUNT**<br>I believe<br>**I matter** | I feel **valuable**<br>I can make a difference<br>I **contribute** |

If we want our children to look for the Crucial Cs through useful means, they need –

## COURAGE

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| I feel **inferior**<br>I may give up<br>I use **avoidance** | I believe<br>**I can handle what comes** | I feel **hopeful**<br>I am willing to try<br>I am **resilient** |

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## Individual Planning Using the "Crucial Cs"

(Chapter 5)

**When a student is missing a "Crucial C":**

1. **Identify which "Crucial C" is lacking (Connection, Capability, Counting, Courage).**

2. **Dialogue with the student about your observation.**

3. **Ask the student what he or she would like to change or do differently.**

4. **Listen for beliefs, labels, absolutes.**

5. **Use strategies from the lists on individual planning using the "Crucial Cs" (p. 64-65) to help the student with solutions.**

6. **The student commits to the plans by:**
   A. writing out the process goal: "I will be... (+ action verb)" related to the "Crucial C."
   B. carrying out the process goal.

7. **Meet for follow-up as necessary.**

# Individual Planning

*(Example 1)*

Student name: *Marcus Dunn* Date 10/10/98

1. I would like to change or do the following differently:

**feel more included in my new school.**

2. The change is about the "Crucial C" of (check one):

__x__ Connection ______ Counting ______ Capability ______ Courage

3. Process Goal ("I will be..." + action verb):

**I will be *attending the next computer club meeting and the next Junior Books Club meeting and deciding which I will join.***

## Individual Planning

*(Example 2)*

Student name: *Marcus Dunn* Date 10/10/98

1. I would like to change or do the following differently:

   ***feel less scared about getting involved in a sport.***

2. The change is about the "Crucial C" of (check one):

   ______ Connection ______ Counting ______ Capability __x__ Courage

3. Process Goal ("I will be..." + action verb):

   **I will be *practicing basketball with my dad every night after dinner.***

# Individual Planning

Student name ______________________________ Date ________________

1. I would like to change or do the following differently:

2. The change is about the "Crucial C" of (check one):

_____ Connection _____ Counting _____ Capability __x__ Courage

3. Process Goal: "I will be... (+ action verb)":

I will be

# Early Recollections

(Chapter 5)

**(Counselors usually ask individuals to recollect 3-7 early memories.)**

1. **Ask the person to recollect an early memory before the age of 8 or 10 which is:**
   A. of a specific event, not just something that he or she used to do.
   B. as detailed as possible, as if watching a movie.

2. **After you hear the detailed account, ask about the most vivid part of the memory** (e.g., "If you could take a snapshot of the most vivid part of your memory, what would the frame look like, and how were you feeling during the most vivid moment?")

3. **Ask, "If you could change any part of the memory, what would you change?"**

4. **Look for themes by assessing the following components of the recollection:**
   A. the feeling tone.
   B. whether or not the person is in the memory.
   C. if there are other people.
   D. how the person relates to others.
   E. how the person relates to authority (or if the individual is the one in control).
   F. the presence of caring.
   G. gender rules.
   H. activity level.
   I. the amount of movement toward a goal.

5. **The themes will be a clue to understanding the person's:**
   A. approach to life.
   B. private logic.
   C. ways of gaining significance.

NOTEBOOK

## Using Early Recollections to Create Solutions in Career Planning

(Chapter 5)

1. **The student completes the Early Recollections form or ask the student the questions from the form.**

2. **Look for themes by assessing the following components of the recollection:**
   A. the feeling tone.
   B. whether or not the person is in the memory.
   C. if there are other people.
   D. how the person relates to others.
   E. how the person relates to authority (or if the individual is the one in control).
   F. the presence of caring.
   G. gender rules.
   H. activity level.
   I. the amount of movement toward a goal.

3. **Check out the themes with the student.**
   Example: *From your memories it appears that working with people is important to you; does that sound accurate?*

4. **From the characteristics that the student decides are important** (i.e., working with people, using analytical skills, a desire to be in the public eye) the student establishes a process goal: "I will be...(+ action verb)".
   Example: *I will be searching the Internet to find career possibilities that will allow me to work with people, use analytical skills, and be in the public eye.*

## Early Recollections of Chores or Early Work Experiences

**Part 1**

Describe an early memory of chores or early work experiences that illustrates a task or event you enjoyed (describe in detail as if watching a movie).

If you took a snapshot of the most vivid part of the memory, what would the frame look like?

How were you feeling during the most vivid part?

What would you change about any part of the memory if you could?

**Part 2**

Describe an early memory of chores or early work experiences that illustrates a task or event you disliked (describe in detail as if watching a movie).

If you took a snapshot of the most vivid part of the memory, what would the frame look like?

How were you feeling during the most vivid part?

What would you change about any part of the memory if you could?

**Part 3**

Describe an early memory of chores or early work experiences that illustrates either a task or event that you enjoyed OR disliked (describe in detail as if watching a movie).

If you took a snapshot of the most vivid part of the memory, what would the frame look like?

How were you feeling during the most vivid part?

What would you change about any part of the memory if you could?

## Using Early Recollections to Create Solutions in Educational Planning

(Chapter 5)

1. **The student completes the Early Recollections form or ask the student the questions from the form.**

2. **Analyze the phrases that indicate:**
   A. learning activities/situations that assisted student success.
   B. through which senses (learning styles) the student learns best.
   C. study skills that have been helpful.

3. **Dialogue with the student regarding the information gained through the Early Recollections.**

4. **Help the student to create solutions to promote the student's success.** The student formulates a process goal: "I will be...(+ action verb)" to carry out the solution.
   Example: *I will be making flashcards of all the highlighted terms in each assigned social studies reading, and studying the flashcards nightly.*

5. **Follow-up as necessary.**

# Early Recollections of Subjects in School

**Part 1**

Describe an early memory of a subject in school that illustrates a task or event you enjoyed (describe in detail as if watching a movie).

If you took a snapshot of the most vivid part of the memory, what would the frame look like?

How were you feeling during the most vivid part?

What would you change about any part of the memory if you could?

**Part 2**

Describe an early memory of a subject in school that illustrates a task or event you disliked (describe in detail as if watching a movie).

If you took a snapshot of the most vivid part of the memory, what would the frame look like?

How were you feeling during the most vivid part?

What would you change about any part of the memory if you could?

**Part 3**

Describe an early memory of a subject in school that illustrates either a task or event that you enjoyed OR disliked (describe in detail as if watching a movie).

If you took a snapshot of the most vivid part of the memory, what would the frame look like?

How were you feeling during the most vivid part?

What would you change about any part of the memory if you could?

| Solution-focused counseling | Adlerian counseling |
|---|---|
| language | early recollections |
| questioning | insight |
| skeleton keys | life-style assessment |
| solutions | motivation modification |
|  | private logic |
|  | reeducation and reorientation |

# CHAPTER 6

## Responsive Services

*David was pleased that Juanita, a counseling intern from the local university, was working with him this semester. He realized, however, after observing her facilitate a session from her "anger management" group, that he wanted to share more about his philosophy of school counseling in the schools with her. He thought that the activity she used in the group was a good start but she could have gotten so much more mileage out of the activity by intensifying it.*

*She began the 30-minute group for second graders by giving each of the eight participants a copy of a worksheet that contained a large lady bug. On the top was written "Something that bugs me." She instructed the students to draw a picture on the paper of something that "bugged" them, and she proceeded to put baskets of markers on the table around which they sat. The students took about 20 minutes to complete their drawings, which left five minutes for the children to share what angered them. David heard comments such as: "When my mom tells me to do something, like take out the trash, when I'm watching TV;" "I hate when my little brother has to do everything I do;" "It bugs me when I get in trouble for something I didn't do;" "I can't stand Jeremiah, he thinks he's so tough." The students seemed to enjoy each others' pictures, however, the group ended somewhat abruptly due to the lack of time.*

*When David provided Juanita with feedback he commended her for her creativity and the preparation she put into the lesson. He remarked that the students seemed to enjoy the lesson, but he questioned how much they learned from it. When she looked at him inquisitively, he said, "It's all a matter of intensity." He felt that the "Something that bugs me" activity was more appropriate as a classroom lesson than as a small group intervention. He demonstrated the inverse relationship between the number of students served and the level of intensity by drawing a graph for Juanita. He explained that while a counselor may see one student individually in a 30-minute timeframe, the counselor could interact with 25 students in a classroom setting during that same period of time. While the individual session is most likely of high intensity, the classroom lesson is low in intensity. Half-way in between would be group counseling, where the number served is smaller than in a classroom setting, but the resulting level of intensity should be higher.*

*David brainstormed with Juanita how she could modify her activity to heighten the intensity of the group interaction. They decided that although drawing was age-appropriate for second graders, the time allocated for drawing had to be greatly reduced in order to allow for more group processing. David suggested that "linking" would strengthen the interactions. Juanita, and even the students, could*

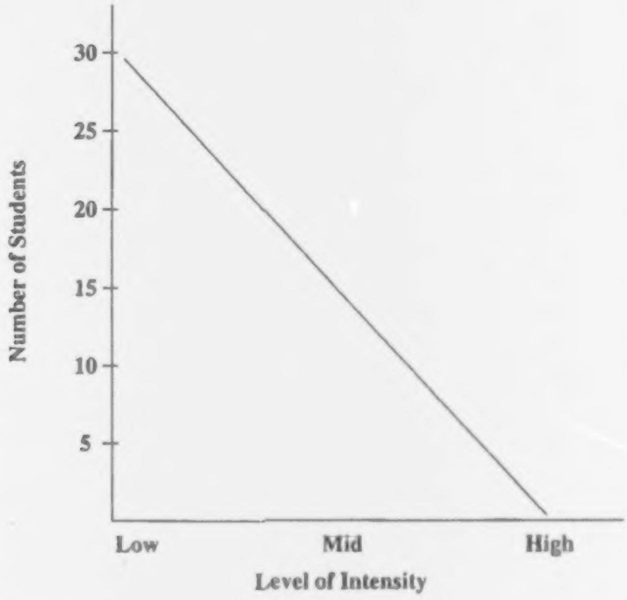

*Table 06-01.*

*attempt to point out similarities between the group members. For example, they could notice that some of the students had relational difficulties with their peers, while other students resented adult interferences. In addition, Juanita realized that she should have students share how they deal with their anger and she could have had students come up with additional solutions.*

## Introduction

Responsive services are those interventions that specifically and immediately respond to the concerns of students and others (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994). They differ from some of the other services in a comprehensive developmental counseling program, such as classroom guidance lessons, in that responsive services are generally more intensive. Unlike the comprehensive curriculum which is offered to all students, responsive services, such as personal counseling, small group counseling, support groups, and crisis counseling, are offered to select students who have concerns that impede them in their social/personal, career, or educational development. Diagnostic and remedial services, including assessment and placement in special needs settings (such as gifted programs, special education classes) are also considered to be responsive services. Providing information, resources, and referral also fall within this category of services.

### *Direct vs. Indirect Services*

While some of the services are offered directly to the students (e.g., individual counseling, group counseling, and crisis counseling), other interventions such as consultation, conferring, parenting classes, home visitation and case consultation (e.g., Student Assistance Programs, Instructional Support Teams, Child Study Teams, and Multi-disciplinary Teams) indirectly benefit the students. To demonstrate how solution-focused/Adlerian approaches are used in direct services to students, individual counseling and crisis counseling are discussed in this chapter, while group counseling is discussed in Chapter Seven. Chapter Eight covers the select indirect services of consulting, case consultation (i.e., team meetings) and parenting classes.

While advocates of comprehensive developmental counseling programs suggest that counselors spend the greater percentage of their time in activities that reach the majority of the students, they also recognize that there are students with whom they need to work individually. From our experience we can say that we have been able to find adequate time to devote to those students who need to see us individually by carefully determining the best setting and intensity for serving each need. For example, if a teacher requests assistance due to a student causing conflict in her classroom, the counselor needs to establish whether it is a systemic problem which involves the whole class, a conflict involving a small faction of the class, or one student's efforts to get a need met. If it is a systemic issue, the counselor has several options. The counselor can approach it educatively by conducting classroom lessons on conflict resolution and cooperation (which would be a low intensity intervention affecting a large group of students in a relatively short amount of time). The counselor can actually train the students in conflict resolution and peer mediation with the hopes that they can facilitate the resolution of difficulties in the future. (This intervention is of a higher intensity and affects a large group of students.) While the initial involvement of time is greater up front, in the long run the investment of time is likely to save time. If the counselor chooses to hold group sessions for the small faction of students involved, the intensity of involvement will be greater while the number of students affected will be smaller. Of the various options, counseling the student individually is the most intense level of intervention and the least time-effective (based on number of students served). In cases where students do need more intense individual work around difficulties they are experiencing, the time is warranted. Counselors determine which responsive service is most appropriate after reviewing a referral form.

### *Referral Form*

An example of a referral form is found on page 98. It provides some ideas for counselors to use in adapting their present referral form to be more solution-focused/Adlerian. Since the form is written in solution-focused terms it is necessary for counselors to inservice the staff on how to complete the form.

As mentioned in Chapter Five, it is helpful for all school personnel to be trained in the "Crucial Cs" as well. This is particularly important since the referral form asks the referring agent to indicate which "Crucial C" is missing.

A complaint that counselors often hear from staff members making referrals is that the staff rarely receives any follow-up regarding the referral. As a result some staff members feel unimportant and discouraged about making future referrals. In an effort to acknowledge the feelings of the referring staff members, as well as respecting confidentiality, we include a tear-off section on the referral form that is completed and returned to the staff member. This procedure acknowledges staff members for their efforts and informs them as to the action taken.

## Individual Counseling

Individual counseling from a solution-focused/Adlerian perspective allows school counselors who embrace a comprehensive developmental approach to provide counseling to those students who will benefit from individual sessions, since the format tends to be brief. The ability to be brief in solution-focused theory emerges from the emphasis on goal attainment, symptom relief, and coping skills, instead of placing importance on finding a "cure" or restructuring personality. Likewise, Adlerian counseling is well-recognized for its brevity. At the time when most of his contemporaries were providing long-term analysis, Adler said, "As to duration, you may say right at the beginning, 'It will take eight to ten weeks'" (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1979, p. 201). The Adlerian approach is future-oriented, goal-determined, and sees life as movement—a teleological point of view. In terms of looking for a cause and a cure, Adler was more interested in finding the meaning that people ascribed to their experiences and reorienting them in their thinking. Sweeney (1989) sees restructuring personality (or the life-style) as psychotherapy, while counseling, which we are interested in as school counselors, is behavior change within the existing life-style.

In Chapter One we discussed the single approach that solution-focused counselors use as they intervene with individuals regardless of the mode (such as counseling or consulting). Below we present the four phases of Adlerian counseling: 1) establishment of the relationship, 2) analysis and assessment, 3) insight, and 4) reeducation and reorientation (Dinkmeyer et al., 1987) along with the integration of solution-focused counseling techniques throughout the four stages. According to Thorn and Thorn (1997) some counselors who use solution-focused counseling alone tend to jump from stage one to stage four and omit the important intervening phases. Finally, we include an actual individual counseling scenario to illustrate an initial session. An outline for counselors to follow during individual counseling sessions is found on page 99-100.

## Phase One: Establishment of the Relationship

In Adlerian counseling the development of a relationship between counselor and counselee is critical. As described in Chapter One, the relationship is an egalitarian one, which means of mutual trust and respect in which there are no superiors or inferiors. Respect is generally displayed through attending behavior and active listening (Dinkmeyer et al., 1987). They further emphasize the importance of goals in counseling: "It is a working session in which conversation has the purpose of developing awareness, generating insight, and stimulating movement. Cooperation and focus on a common therapeutic task are essential for change to occur" (p. 87).

Solution-focused counselors do not spend inordinate amounts of time on rapport building. They recognize that relationships develop quickly, particularly in a school setting (Huber & Backlund, 1991).

Solution-focused counseling is an approach for considering how people change, for transforming brief conversations into helping experiences, and for constructing solutions interactively. In the first session the counselor gives the student an idea of what he or she can expect from counseling and sets the tone for change by asking the student what it is he or she would like to change or do differently. By addressing the student's complaint in this way, the focus is on change and movement, and the complaint is reframed in terms of a goal. As the student describes the difficulty, the counselor listens to how the student is currently (unsuccessfully) attempting to solve the problem and asks questions that help the student uncover any exceptions, which Huber and Backlund define as "whatever is happening when a difficulty is being adequately dealt with" (p. 52).

These two theories can be easily integrated in a comprehensive developmental counseling program. In such a model, the counselor should be readily known to all of the students from the counselor's regular classroom visits and high visibility in the school. If the counselor is already relating to students in an egalitarian manner, then little time will be needed in a first session to establish such a relationship. The counselor sets the tone for change by asking the student, "What is it you would like to change or do differently?" The counselor shows interest through attending behavior and active listening—with special attention to the solutions the student discusses. Little attention is given to complaints. The counselor focuses on the language that the student uses and reflects back less disturbed language (i.e., *discouraged* rather than *depressed*) when labels are used. In addition, the counselor will substitute qualifiers when he or she hears the student use absolutes (i.e., *never* becomes *sometimes*). A discussion of labels and absolutes is found in Chapter One. Both approaches emphasize working toward goals, which is accentuated by ending the first session with some solution-focused homework, "Between now and the next time we meet, notice what you make happen that you would like to happen more often."

## Phase Two: Analysis and Assessment

During this stage the Adlerian counselor attempts to understand the thoughts (private logic) which guide individuals in understanding, predicting, and attempting to manage their environment. Life-style assessment is one means of achieving an understanding of the individual's functioning in the life tasks. As mentioned in Chapter Three, Adler believed that all human problems fall within three main categories: occupational, social, and intimacy. There are various publications on how to do life-style assessments (such as Powers and Griffith's, 1987) and several published life-style assessments (such as Kern, Wheeler and Curlette's Basic-A Inventory, 1997). Kottman (1995) has included a list of life-style questions for children in her book, Partners in Play: An Adlerian Approach to Play Therapy. For children, school is their occupational task of life. A question in this area from Kottman is "What would you like to change about school?" (p. 214). A social question is "How do you get along with other kids your age?" (p. 214).

The life-style is also assessed through the student's family atmosphere which is formulated through a family-constellation questionnaire. These questions help determine the relationship between the student and family members. Kottman (1995) also includes family atmosphere and constellation questions in her list of life-style questions for children. An example of such a question is "What do you get in trouble for at home?" (p. 214).

Early recollections (explained in Chapter Five) are another means of information gathering about the life-style. Early recollections are specific incidents recalled from early childhood. Early recollections reveal the individual's beliefs and mistaken attitudes.

Early recollections are valuable because, according to the Adlerian theory of personality, they are indices of present attitudes, beliefs, and motives (Mosak, 1958) and because Adlerians believe that people remember only those events from early childhood that are consistent with their present views of themselves and the world (Adler, 1958, cited in Dinkmeyer et al., 1987, p. 107).

When the counselor has a good understanding of the student's life-style the counselor begins to formulate hypotheses about how the child sees himself or herself and the world. The counselor is then ready to hypothesize how behavior reflects perceptions (Kottman, 1995).

Similarly, in solution-focused counseling the counselor attempts to understand counselees' beliefs through the language that they use. From the student's language the counselor tries to determine the basic rule from which the individual operates.

This would be very similar to the student's life-style. Some examples might be:

- "I need to always be right no matter what;"
- "I need to be the center of attention;"
- "I can't show anyone my strengths, because then they might expect more of me."

If the underlying belief is a helpful one, in a later phase the counselor will help the student find a solution consistent with the belief. If the belief is not a helpful one, the counselor can later encourage the student to "do something different"—even 180 degrees different if necessary.

In solution-focused/Adlerian counseling the counselor can use a variety of Adlerian assessment techniques in combination with the emphasis on language to understand the student's beliefs. With an understanding of the student's beliefs the counselor can help the student reframe the initial complaint into a process goal (which is explained in detail in Chapter Two).

## Phase Three: Insight

The insight phase of Adlerian counseling helps counselees become aware of why they choose to function in the manner that they do (Dinkmeyer et al., 1987). With emphasis on beliefs and goals, the counselor and the student discuss the individual's private logic in an effort to understand it. Those who operate from their own private logic solve problems in a manner that is not consistent with common sense (with the common good of all in mind) but rather in a self-centered way. The counselor tries to create insight by making the students aware of how their life-style impedes the leading of a successful and satisfying life. The interpretation is done in terms of the student's movement, referring to the direction and course of the student's transactions with others. Interpretation deals with the purpose of the behavior and the consequences and is done holistically, in terms of the meaning and scope of the pattern of movement.

Interpretation is usually done tentatively: "Could it be that...?" "I have a guess as to..." Since the hunch is offered so tentatively, it allows counselees to respond in the manner which they choose. If the interpretation is totally inaccurate, both the counselor and student can discuss other alternatives. Counselors need to watch for the times when students verbally dismiss an interpretation, but at the same time make a nonverbal recognition reflex. It is helpful when a student begins to make sense of the interpretation since it means that the individual is seeing some of the behaviors and attitudes in a new light. By exposing the hidden intentions, the self-defeating behavior is no longer as palatable. This is what Adler referred to as "spitting in the soup." Although the student may still engage in the behavior, now that the intention is revealed it is not as pleasant.

In solution-focused counseling this phase is concerned with helping students find solutions that work for them. These solutions are often based on the exceptions that they have already revealed. We refer to these as "skeleton keys" (de Shazer, 1985) since often times one solution (i.e., choosing to communicate rather than withdraw) can work in many problematic situations. It is important to notice that this example also is a 180 degree turn—the opposite of withdrawing is communicating. The counselor encourages students to remind themselves of things that have worked for them in the past and the strengths that they already possess. The counselor may need to challenge the student to find a solution that is consistent with any underlying beliefs that are helpful and to do just the opposite when the underlying belief is not helpful.

## Phase Four: Reeducation and Reorientation

In this phase the student's goals are reassessed in terms of how realistic they are. Since unrealistic goals can be discouraging, they are modified to be more realistic and within the student's control. In addition, the counselor helps the student to develop the courage to take risks and make changes. In this phase the counselor and the counselee co-create alternative attitudes, beliefs, and actions. The student learns that insight has little value by itself and that this new knowledge must now be put into action. Since the goal of Adlerian counseling is active-constructive behavior, counselors teach students how they can create and maintain functional alternatives in their lives. This is done primarily through "motivation-modification" (as opposed to behavior modification) which focuses on changing attitudes, perceptions, beliefs, and goals, which in turn affects behavior. The student learns to generalize the changes he or she has made to other settings and situations. "A new orientation toward people and the life tasks, which is the goal of the reorientation phase, comes about as the client's beliefs, perceptions, feelings, and goals become more appropriate and more in line with common sense" (Dinkmeyer et al., 1987, p. 120).

Just as Adlerian counselors readdress the goals and progress the counselee is making at this phase of the treatment, solution-focused counselors do so as well. Therefore, a critical part of the counseling process is assessing the student's progress toward goal achievement and addressing any obstacles that might impede progress. In this phase, the focus is to amplify successful solutions through such questions as: "What are you doing that you want to see happen more?" "How did you decide to do that?" "How did you think to make use of your more successful rule?" "What exactly did you do that you did not do in the past?"

If students report that things are going better, the counselor asks, "What will you do to get that to happen more often?" If students state that things are not better or are unchanged, the counselor asks, "How are you keeping things from getting worse?" If some students feel that they cannot stop the urge to do something that goes counter to their goal, the counselor asks them, "Pay attention to what you do to overcome or stop the urge" (Huber & Backlund, 1991).

A solution-focused/Adlerian counselor uses this final phase to re-evaluate goals and reeducate students so that they have alternative solutions to use in facing the tasks of life. Counselors can ask students "scaling questions" (described in Chapter Two) to readily assess how they are doing. In the quote by Dinkmeyer et al. (1987) above, it seems that a skeleton key to achieving goals is to move from solutions that are based on private logic to solutions that are grounded in common sense (for the common good). In the study we reported in Chapter One, that was also our finding: that students achieved their goals at a statistically significant difference when their goal was of social interest, than when it was not.

### Termination

In Adlerian counseling, indicators for termination are when the child shows evidence that he or she has changed the basic convictions and approaches to dealing with the life tasks. The goals of behavior should demonstrate movement from the negative goals of destructive attention, power, revenge and inadequacy to more positive goals of behavior. The child should relate to others with increased social interest (Kottman, 1995).

The solution-focused counselor looks for: a) students to report at least a small but significant change, b) the change to seem durable, and c) students to imply that they can handle things on their own. Together then, counselors will know termination is appropriate when the student is reporting that he or she is ready to move on, and the student is showing evidence of changes through behavior. As school counselors know, students are never truly "terminated" since in the school setting the counselor will surely run into students in the hall, and classroom. School counselors can easily touch base with the student from time to time informally to see how things are going. In the event the student needs to return for a "booster" session, the two can readily reengage and move forward since they speak a common language such as: process goals, keys, scaling, and obstacles.

## Case Illustration

This is a case illustration of an initial session with an eleven year-old girl who was referred to me (Garner) by the superintendent. There was suspected violence in the family, including a recent suicide attempt by the mother. Since I had already established an egalitarian relationship with the girl through the regular visits that I made to her classroom, little time was needed to establish rapport. I showed my interest by listening to the difficulties she was experiencing at home, and was careful to attend to the language she used rather than the complaints. In our initial meeting, the girl reported that over Easter break her father came home drunk and began to argue with her mother. The mother stormed out of the house, taking her bottle of prescription sleeping pills with her. Shortly thereafter, the mother called from a pay phone to inform them that she had taken an overdose. The mother was flown to an intensive care unit where she was unconscious for a period of time. The student reported that this is not an unusual situation in her family: her father frequently comes home drunk and the mother has overdosed on pills before.

When I asked the girl how she fit into this family situation, she described herself as being "caught in the middle." She explained that the father asks her not to let the mother know that he has been drinking, but the mother invariably asks her whether he was drinking. I asked her about the use of the label "caught in the middle," by reframing her statement with less-disturbed language: "What happens when you choose not to place yourself in the middle of your parents' difficulties?"

She responded by saying that when the mother asks her about his drinking, she just tells the mother the truth, and then the parents leave her out of the situation. I pointed out that she had found a positive way to stay out of the parents' conflict. We discussed the concept that she has no control over her parents' difficulty and does not spend much time with them because she lives at a residential school. I asked her what she "would like to change or do differently?"

The student switched gears and said that while she realizes that her "family situation is hopeless to change," something she would like to change or do differently would be to get on the Honor Roll. I asked her what obstacles were keeping her off the Honor Roll now. She stated that she "never" does her math homework, that she blames the teacher for assigning too much work, and that she gets smart with the teacher when she gets frustrated. I looked for an exception in her use of the absolute "never," by helping her find a time when she is being successful. I asked, "You say that you "never" do your math homework, but surely there are times when you actually get it done. When are some times when you do your work? What is different?"

The student said that she will do her math homework if there is a 'yellow slip' attached to it. A 'yellow slip' is a form from the teacher indicating that the student has not done the homework from the previous night and must attempt it again. Since this is a residential school, the house parent sees the 'yellow slip' after school and will impose consequences on a student (i.e., no TV until the work is done this time.)

We discussed the fact that while she had no control over her parents' situation - aside from choosing not to get "caught in the middle" when she visits - she does have a high degree of control and choice over doing her homework and eventually getting on the Honor Roll. I remarked that a key that she had discovered regarding her homework was the extra motivation that a 'yellow slip' provided.

At this point, I attempted to understand the girl's private logic, which guided her in attempting to manage her environment. I hypothesized that she felt that her environment controlled her; that she had not recognized that she was making some choices. I asked the girl if she would be willing to try an experiment: if there was a 'yellow slip' attached to her math homework every day, even if it was not yet the second attempt, would she be more likely to do it? She looked surprised and said, "You bet I would! I don't want to lose any more privileges!" She said she would be willing to try this experiment for one week. I asked her, "During this week, notice what you make happen that you would like to have happen more often." When the session concluded, we visited the teacher. The student took the initiative of proposing this idea to her teacher, who was surprised (no student had ever requested 'yellow slips' before!) but supportive.

My goal in this brief initial session was to assist the student in recognizing that she had some degree of control to effect positive changes in her life. In subsequent sessions the student came to realize that although she initially thought the 'yellow slip' experiment was another example of external control in her life, in fact, she was taking control by choosing this means to motivate her to do her work. She eventually realized that she could take responsibility for her schoolwork on her own. The solutions that she found helpful in regard to her schoolwork also assisted her in coping with some of her family issues as well.

## Crisis Counseling

The most intensive level of counseling is crisis counseling. At the time of a crisis it is likely that the counselor abandons all other activities to focus on the needs of the student(s) affected by the crisis. Following are solution-focused/Adlerian approaches to be used when: 1) an individual is in crisis (i.e., abuse of a student, death of a family member, suicidal attempt); and 2) the entire school or faction of it is affected by a crisis (i.e., death of a teacher, suicide of a student, natural disaster). Counselors will find the stages in handling a crisis very similar to those taken in individual counseling—again emphasizing the one-approach perspective which makes the model so easy to use. It is particularly comforting for counselors to have a predictable plan of action to follow in the midst of a hectic situation. Because of the intensity of the intervention and the need to move toward crisis resolution, the counselor may move through the stages with the student in one session.

### Individual in Crisis

Phase One. When an individual is in crisis the counselor's first step is to ensure that the student is in a safe environment. Initially the counselor merely listens to the student, which often helps the student to feel heard, to calm down, and to bring about a state of equilibrium. Metcalf (1995) emphasizes aligning oneself with the student by asking such questions as: "How have you managed to this point?" "How have you kept things from getting worse?" (p. 175). Just as in individual counseling, the counselor makes some initial hypotheses as the student shares information. The counselor listens for the student's beliefs, language, life-style, private logic and any exceptions. When the counselor assesses that it is appropriate, the counselor should reflect back less disturbed language (without minimizing the situation) and use qualifiers instead of absolutes.

Phase Two. The counselor assesses the student's support systems by asking about the make-up of family, friends, and other social ties the student may have. In order to help a student start to take some action, the counselor asks the student to imagine what things would look like if things were better. This hypothetical question allows them to begin to think more realistically and optimistically about their situation. Metcalf (1995) suggests asking, "How will you know when things are slightly better for you?" (p. 175). This leads into a discussion of goal setting.

Phase Three. The counselor makes tentative hypotheses which help the student see how his or her behavior may be impacting the situation: "Could it be you are blaming yourself for something you had no control over?" The counselor encourages the student to find useful solutions in the immediate situation by identifying exceptions, strengths, underlying beliefs that are helpful, and relying on those things that have worked in the past. In this phase, counselors can ask such questions as:

- "What were some times when this problem wasn't occurring?"
- "How have you handled other difficult situations in the past?"
- "What helpful things can you tell yourself about this situation?"
- "What has worked for you in previous troubling times?"

Phase Four. Together the counselor and student co-create a plan of action based on what has worked in the past and the student's strengths. At times in crisis counseling the counselor may need to be more directive than usual so as to ensure the continued safety of the student. This may include offering suggestions if the student does not readily come up with them, and notifying the student's parents and other authorities (based on school policy).

Follow-Up and Termination. It is necessary for the counselor to follow-up with the student to ensure his or her continued safety and resolution of the problem. When the counselor is assured that the student is handling the situation satisfactorily (in consultation with others) then the intensive counseling can decrease and be replaced by brief "check-ins."

## A Large–Scale Crisis

In a crisis that involves the whole school or a faction of it, usually a team of professionals, often referred to as an intervention team, is called in to the school. The team members work with individual students, small groups, and classrooms during times of crisis. The previously outlined stages are followed but on a grander scale. Initially the team ensures safety and offers support. The ultimate goal is to reestablish equilibrium in the system. A well designed plan, based on the strengths of the staff members, will facilitate a smoother intervention in such a critical time. We encourage staffs to make a process goal regarding the establishment of a crisis intervention plan. For example, "The crisis intervention planning committee will be meeting from 3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. each Wednesday to develop procedures and a training model for establishing a crisis intervention plan." With such a plan, staff members can approach crises with solutions in mind.

Palmo, Langlois, and Bender (1988) propose that school boards can help sanction the development of policy and procedure statements for crisis situations by appointing a committee to take on this critical task. Following the development of policy, the committee needs to develop procedures so that each member of the intervention team knows what his or her responsibilities are.

Palmo et al. (1998) suggest that the committee conducts a thorough needs assessment of the school personnel on which they will base training models. They sound solution-focused when they say, "The training programs need to fit the personnel strengths and organizational patterns of each district." In other words, the program should be tailor-made to allow staff to carry out those functions that they already do well and to build on the strengths that the district already possesses.

A simple example would be if the high school already has an effective "phone tree" established for alerting staff members about school cancellations, then it would make sense to use it as well for notifying staff members of crises. On the other hand, if the middle school already has a very cooperative child study team, the team members could serve equally as effectively as the core intervention team with other staff members assigned duties in relation to their skills.

Palmo et al. (1988) state that training programs need to be provided for several key groups. For example, those assigned to the crisis intervention team need to be thoroughly trained in their specific roles and responsibilities. Palmo et al. caution that although it is presumed that counselors have been trained in crisis intervention, it is not always the case. They suggest that the crisis intervention planning committee survey the counselors as to their training needs and then establish the appropriate training.

Of course, the best solution to a crisis is prevention. Palmo et al.'s statement that "Schools can help prevent student self-destructive behaviors through the formal curricula such as health, psychology, family living, and guidance classes" (1988, p. 100) further supports the need for a comprehensive school counseling curriculum. Through the solution-focused/Adlerian techniques of building on strengths, developing process goals, cooperation, egalitarianism, social interest, and finding solutions, schools can plan and implement effective crisis intervention plans. An abbreviated plan is found on page 96.

## Conclusion

Responsive services are specific and immediate interventions that are utilized with select students who have concerns in areas such as personal-social, career, or educational. Some of the responsive services that are delivered directly to the student such as individual and crisis counseling were discussed in this chapter. Group counseling, another direct responsive service, is discussed in Chapter Seven, and Chapter Eight covers indirect solution-focused/Adlerian services such as consultation.

## Sample Abbreviated Crisis Intervention Plan

Definition: For the purposes of this plan, a crisis shall be defined as any incident that involves serious injury or death to a student or students in the district as well as any natural disaster that affects member(s) of the student body.

The crisis intervention team carries out the plan in accordance with the following procedures. The role of the crisis intervention team is to assist the principal and the staff of the school in periods of crisis. Following the crisis, it is the responsibility of the school counseling staff to provide and/or make arrangements for long term follow-up.

The responsibilities of the various crisis intervention team members are listed below:
(For the purposes of this abbreviated crisis intervention plan, only the responsibilities for the building principal and counseling staff are given).

The Building Principal:

- notifies the Superintendent's office
- alerts the crisis intervention team
- notifies the faculty that a crisis has occurred
- gathers factual information and convenes a meeting of the crisis intervention team; the team develops a written statement and makes it available to all faculty members
- conducts an emergency staff meeting, with the assistance of the crisis intervention team, with the following goals in mind:
    a. introduce the crisis intervention team to the staff
    b. share the factual information
    c. announce the availability and location of the team members
    d. designate meeting rooms
    e. make any necessary schedule changes
    f. discuss how the information will be shared with students
    g. announce plans for a debriefing meeting after school
- makes arrangements for additional staff, as needed, in conjunction with school counselors
- notifies principals of siblings of the injured or deceased
- offers to meet with the family of the injured or deceased (along with the counselor) and provide assistance as needed
- composes a letter to express sorrow to the families of the victim(s)
- makes arrangements to have personal belongings returned to the family
- following a death, contacts family members to offer condolences and inquire about their desire to have faculty and/or students attend services
- following an injury, contacts family members to inquire about the student's well-being and the student's desire to be visited by faculty and/or students
- makes arrangements for students to attend funeral services

Counseling Staff:

- offers guidance and assistance to the members of the crisis intervention team who will be providing support services to students and staff throughout the day
- confers with the principal about the need to bring in outside mental health staff to assist
- provides written guidelines for faculty and staff regarding ways in which they can help students
- works with the principal in arranging and participating in meetings with the family of the victim
- offers support to students, faculty, staff, and parents
- ensures the removal of the name of the deceased student from attendance roles, and computer programs

# What We Are Already Doing That Is Solution-Focused/Adlerian Responsive Services Component

1. **Check which activities:**
   - A. **you are already doing.**
   - B. **you are doing in a solution-focused way.**
   - C. **you are doing in an Adlerian way.**
2. **Brainstorm ways to adapt the activities to a solution-focused/Adlerian model.**

| Activity | Currently doing and would like to continue to do | Activity is | | To adapt it to a Solution-Focused/ Adlerian model we will be... |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | SF | AD | |
| *Direct Services* | | | | |
| Individual counseling | | | | |
| Group counseling | | | | |
| Support groups | | | | |
| Crisis counseling | | | | |
| Diagnostic services | | | | |
| Remedial services | | | | |
| Assessment | | | | |
| Placement in special needs settings | | | | |
| Providing information and resources | | | | |
| *Indirect Services* | | | | |
| Consultation | | | | |
| Conferring | | | | |
| Parenting classes | | | | |
| Home visitation | | | | |
| Case consultation (e.g., team meetings) | | | | |
| Other | | | | |

**SF = Solution-Focused** **AD = Adlerian**

## REFERRAL FORM

**Student's name** ______________________ **Grade** __________ **Date** __________

**Referred by** ____________________________________________

(Circle one.)

**Have you shared this referral with the student?** yes no

**Have you shared this referral with the student's parent(s)** yes no

**What is the presenting difficulty? (Please be as specific as possible.)**

**What have you tried so far?**

**When are times when the student is not experiencing this difficulty?**

**What will the student be doing differently in order to be successful?**

---

**The counselor will check which service(s) the student (or significant other) will receive.**

---

___Individual counseling
___Diagnostic services
___Providing resources
___Home visitation
___Group counseling
___Remedial services
___Consultation
___Case consultation
___Support groups
___Assessment
___Conferring
___Other______________
___Crisis counseling
___Special placement
___Parenting classes

---

*The counselor will return this portion to the referral source.*

Thank you for referring ____________________.
The student will receive the following services:

______________________
Counselor's name

## Individual Counseling

(Chapter 6)

**Phase One: Establishment of the Relationship**

1. **Establish trust by discussing some common experiences shared with the student, such classroom lessons.**

2. **Share the expectations for counseling in a mutual dialogue with the student.** Set the tone by asking the student, "What would you like to change or do differently in your life?"

3. **Listening strategies:**
   - A. Actively listen as the student shares.
   - B. Make an initial hypothesis (to self) regarding the student's:
     1. belief about the situation.
     2. language: use of labels and absolutes.
     3. life-style.
     4. private logic or common sense.
     5. presentation of any exceptions.

4. **Responding Strategies:**
   - A. Do not attend to comments that encourage continued complaining.
   - B. Use less disturbed language (i.e., *discouraged* rather than *depressed*; *eats too much at times* rather than *overeats*) and make it more behavioral.
   - C. When students use absolutes such as *always*, reflect back qualifiers (i.e., *always* becomes *frequently*).

5. **End the session with some solution-focused homework,** "Between now and the next time we meet, notice what you make happen that you would like to happen more often."

**Phase Two: Analysis and Assessment**

1. **Student shares what he or she made happen between the last time you met and now that he or she would like to see more.**

2. **As the student responds, hypothesize about the student's life-style through how the student approaches the tasks of life.** You may further analyze the life-style through:
   - A. formal life-style assessments.
   - B. asking life-style questions.
   - C. family-constellation questionnaires.
   - D. early recollections.

3. **Continue to listen to the language that the student uses.**
   - A. Hypothesize about the student's belief about his or her situation.
   - B. Determine the basic rule from which the student operates.

4. **Assist the student in setting process goals** (which are stated in the positive, in process form, in the here and now, in specific terms, within the student's control, and in the student's language) through:
   - A. hypothetical questioning.
   - B. assistance in moving from a hypothetical situation to a realistic one.

**Phase Three: Insight**

1. **The student shares the progress he or she is making in terms of the process goal.**

2. **Tentatively interpret the student's behavior** (using statements such as "Could it be that...?" "I have a guess as to...") to help the student gain:
   - A. an understanding of his or her private logic.
   - B. awareness of how his or her life-style impedes the leading of a successful and satisfying life.
   - C. an understanding of his or her movement (the direction and course of the student's transactions with others).
   - D. an understanding of the purpose of his or her behavior.

3. **Watch the student to see if the student:**
   - A. dismisses the interpretation.
   - B. acknowledges the interpretation.
   - C. verbally dismisses the interpretation yet nonverbally shows recognition through a reflex.

4. **Encourage the student to find useful solutions through relying on:**
   - A. the exceptions that he or she reveals.
   - B. those things that have worked for him or her in the past.
   - C. his or her strengths.
   - D. underlying beliefs that are helpful.

5. **Share examples of solutions** (or skeleton keys) with the student such as:
   - A. doing something different.
   - B. making 180 degree change.
   - C. taking small baby steps.
   - D. pretending.

**Phase Four: Reeducation and Reorientation**

1. **Reassess with the student the appropriateness of the goal and help the student redefine or modify it if necessary.**

2. **Assess with the student the progress the student is making toward the goal.**
   - A. Amplify successful solutions by asking:
     "What happened that you want to see happen more?"
     "How did you decide to do that?"
     "How did you think to make use of your more successful rule?"
   - B. Ask students who report things are going better, "What will you do to get that to happen more often?"

3. **Address with the student any obstacles that might impede progress.**
   - A. Ask students who report that things are not better or changed, "How are you keeping things from getting worse?"
   - B. Ask students who report that they cannot stop the urge to do things they should not, "Pay attention to what you do to overcome or stop the urge."

4. **Co-create with the student alternative attitudes, beliefs, and actions.** Reeducate the student to:
   - A. put the new knowledge gained from insight into action.
   - B. include a social interest component in the goals.

**Termination**

1. **Decide together to terminate counseling when the student:**
   - A. reports a small but significant change, and the change seems to be durable.
   - B. implies that he or she can handle things.
   - C. shows evidence that there is a change in convictions and approaches in dealing with life tasks.
   - D. demonstrates more positive goals of behavior.
   - E. relates to others with social interest.

## Crisis Resolution

(Chapter 6)

**Phase One: Alignment with the Student**

1. **Ensure that the student is safe.**

2. **Listening strategies:**
   - A. Actively listen as the student shares.
   - B. Make an initial hypothesis (to self) regarding the student's:
     1. belief about the situation.
     2. language: use of labels and absolutes.
     3. lifestyle.
     4. private logic or common sense.
     5. presentation of any exceptions.

3. **Responding strategies:**
   - A. Respond with less disturbed language (i.e., *discouraged* rather than *depressed*) without minimizing the situation.
   - B. Reflect back qualifiers (i.e., *always* becomes *frequently*) when the student uses absolutes such *as always*.

**Phase Two: Assessment of Ability to Move toward Goals**

1. **Assess the student's support systems: family, friends, other social ties.**

2. **Ask the student to imagine what things would look like if they were going better.**

3. **Move the student to more reality by asking, "How will you know when things are slightly better?"**

**Phase Three: Insight**

1. **Help the student to see how his or her behavior may be impacting the situation by making tentative hypotheses, "Could it be...?"**

2. **Encourage the student to find useful solutions in the immediate situation by identifying:**
   - A. exceptions.
   - B. strengths.
   - C. underlying beliefs that are helpful.
   - D. those things that have worked in the past.

3. **Ask questions such as:**
   "What were some times when this problem wasn't occurring?"
   "How have you handled other difficult situations in the past?"
   "What helpful things can you tell yourself about this situation?"
   "What has worked for you in previous troubling times?"

**Phase Four: Reorientation**

1. **Co-create with the student a plan of action based on the student's strengths and from what has worked in the past.**

2. **Ensure the continued safety of the student, which may include notifying the student's parents and other authorities as school policy dictates.**

**Follow-Up**

1. **Follow up with the student to ensure his or her continued safety and resolution of the difficulty, by "checking in" from time to time.**

2. **Assess with the student the progress he or she is making toward the goal.**
   A. Amplify successful solutions by asking:
      "What did you do that you want to see happen more?"
      "How did you decide to do that?"
      "How did you think to make use of your more successful rule?"
   B. Ask students who report that things are going better, "What will you do to get that to happen more often?"

3. **Address with the student any obstacles that might impede progress.**
   A. Ask students who report that things are not better or changed, "How are you keeping things from getting worse?"
   B. Ask students who report that they cannot stop the urge to do the things they should not, "Pay attention to what you do to overcome or stop the urge."

4. **Co-create with the student alternative attitudes, beliefs, and actions.** Reeducate the student to:
   A. put the new knowledge gained from insight into action.
   B. include a social interest component in the goals.

**Termination**

1. **Decide with the student to terminate counseling when the student:**
   A. reports a small but significant change, and the change seems to be durable.
   B. implies that he or she can handle things.
   C. shows evidence that there is a change in convictions and approaches in dealing with life tasks.
   D. demonstrates more positive goals of behavior.
   E. relates to others with social interest.

| **Solution-focused counseling** | **Adlerian counseling** |
|---|---|
| avoidance of labels | belonging |
| beliefs | common themes |
| exceptions | cooperation |
| miracle question | egalitarian process |
| overcoming obstacles | encouragement |
| polyocularity | tasks of life |
| process goals | |
| skeleton keys | |

# CHAPTER 7

## Responsive Services: Solution-Focused/Adlerian Counseling Groups

*After David discussed the intensity level of counseling groups with Juanita, he also asked her how she had screened the children for the "anger management" group. Juanita told him that the second grade teacher had mentioned that a few of the children in her class "had tempers" so Juanita built the group around those children and added other students that the teacher said would serve as good role models. David told her about the solution-focused/Adlerian groups he recently began which involved students from his existing caseload who had presenting problems that differed from each other. With this model he found scheduling much easier and that he didn't have to worry about labels. He found the groups to be rejuvenating and felt that by seeing students in groups, he was giving them more personal time than the "production-line" type of service he sometimes felt when dealing with a steady stream of individual appointments.*

## Introduction

### *Overcoming Obstacles Associated with Group Counseling*

When counselors apply solution-focused/Adlerian approaches in their counseling groups, members benefit from both the positive solution-focused orientation as well as the therapeutic factors inherent in group work. Counselors profit as well, since solution-focused/Adlerian groups help them to overcome many of the obstacles associated with running groups such as time constraints and scheduling. These groups allow for the formation of heterogeneous groups where students with a variety of presenting difficulties can be grouped together. Even if students present problems that appear to differ from their peers, de Shazer believes that there is the common underlying need for emotional relief and a desire to maintain a more satisfying and enriching life. Likewise, as previously described, Adler saw all problems stemming from the tasks of life (occupation, social, and intimacy). Therefore, students with seemingly diverse presenting problems actually can be intimately linked with one another through their common pain. Yalom (1995) refers to this linkage as universality. Through groups, students experience a sense of belonging—a basic need identified by Adler. In addition, students are able to serve as role models for each other. For example, a student struggling academically but proficient in social skills serves as a model for another group member who has difficulty making friends. This arrangement resolves a question with which school counselors often struggle—whether or not to include some "good" kids in the group to serve as role models.

Because of the variety of concerns presented and the focus on solutions, these groups do not present the same stigmas that might be associated with groups for specific populations of children, such as children of alcoholics or children who have the diagnosis of Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. While these solution-focused groups help remediate children's behavior, they are also developmental, since they focus on strengths of individual group members.

Another barrier to group counseling in the schools can be the lack of understanding by teachers, administrators, and parents. A "Solutions Group" with its positive connotation could help eliminate many misunderstandings.

Scheduling becomes less of a problem when counselors move from single-issue groups to solution-focused groups that can accommodate students with a variety of presenting difficulties. Counselors are often delayed in starting groups because of their inability to find a meeting time for all students who have a common issue (grief, for example). Instead of counselors having to find a time that is convenient for the groups members, counselors planning solution-focused groups can find times that are most convenient to their own schedules and then group students according to those who are available at the scheduled times. Counselors are not limited to grouping students from any one class or grade level either. These groups can effectively accommodate students within several grade levels of each other.

As school counselors begin to realize the benefits of solution-focused groups, they can effectively transfer individuals on their existing caseload into group counseling, thus freeing up time for other important responsibilities. In the end, the students greatly benefit from being treated in the social context of a group, which more closely reflects the reality of daily living.

## Prescreening

Prescreening, which may seem initially time consuming, is a useful interview process which sets the tone for the group and helps assure a well-functioning group. We find presceening takes only about 10-15 minutes; since we advocate that counselors form their groups from students on their existing caseload, time is not needed for rapport building. The form that we developed and use is on page 111. Prescreening is an egalitarian process which allows counselors to determine if students are appropriate for the group and in turn offers students the chance to learn more about the group and whether or not they would like to participate. Counselors are encouraged to use solution-oriented talk with students throughout the entire group process, including the prescreening. The initial question a counselor asks is, "What is it you would like to change?" Subsequently, group members realize that the group is action-oriented and centers around new ways of developing solutions.

Counselors assess the students' ability to cooperate by their willingness to state what it is they want to change, and their feelings about sharing in a group. Granted, few students come in with a good understanding of what they want to change, let alone a clear statement of it, but a skillful counselor can help students in their clarification. For example, one female student who we selected for a group initially stated that she wanted kids to stop teasing her about her weight. After further discussion, she admitted that she wanted to lose weight. It was interesting that in the first group session, when she had to share what it is she wanted to change, she further revised it to say, "I want to feel better about myself."

We have been able to include students in the group who others may call "resistant," by putting a different twist on the difficulty they present. A common complaint is that students want their teachers or parents to leave them alone. As counselors we know that this is not going to happen as the student wishes, however we know that we may be able to help students alter their behaviors in order to help students improve their relationships with these significant others. By offering the students the opportunity to learn ways in the group to get their teachers or parents "off their back," students are often interested. As a result, the behaviors they learn to get these adults "off their back" are exactly those behaviors that the adults have been nagging them about.

As described earlier, individuals present their beliefs about their situations by the language they use. In the prescreening and the group sessions as well, counselors need to listen for students' use of labels and absolutes which convey helplessness toward change, and help the students replace their impotent language with verb forms and qualifiers. When an adolescent says, "I'm an overeater," the counselor can clarify by saying, "You tend to eat too much at times."

The goal of using a solution-focused/Adlerian approach in group, as in individual counseling, is for individuals to find solutions to their difficulties. In the group they will benefit from polyocularity, "many eyes," a term de Shazer (1985) uses when he describes the benefits that clients derive by receiving counseling at his training institute in Milwaukee. Behind the one-way mirror are many "experts" and "experts-in-training" who provide valuable feedback to the client via the therapist. Likewise, in group, the members benefit from the many viewpoints of each other. Even more specifically, they can adopt the solutions that they find the other group members using in their lives. We call these solutions "skeleton keys" (de Shazer, 1985) since they are transferable solutions that can apply in many situations and can also be used by many different people. As students in the group see other members applying similar solutions to a variety of difficulties, they can more readily generalize the solution to their own situation.

The students progress through the group stages as defined by Yalom (1995). These stages are indicated within the case illustration.

## Case Illustration

*The case illustration that follows demonstrates how the previously described solution-focused/Adlerian techniques are applied in a group setting. The case is taken from a solution-focused counseling group that we videotaped. We use the video for instructional purposes in solution-focused/Adlerian group training. Following the case illustration are a prescreening form, session outlines, and objectives for each session.*

*The case illustration describes each session, focused around objectives to encourage students to construct solutions to their difficulties. Our responses and interventions were designed to create a context for change when group processing and interaction were emphasized. Although we targeted these activities for middle-school age children in our videotaped group, the interventions can be easily adapted for other age groups. The general rule is that the younger the children are the more concrete the activities need to be. We continually monitored the needs of the group with respect to developmental level and degree of structure required because of its multi-grade level composition.*

*We concluded each session with encouragement and a task. Encouragement was used to reinforce those statements that the participants had shared that were useful or effective. We assigned tasks to provide direction for constructing change.*

*The group that we video-taped consisted of nine middle-school students (grades 6 through 8). Six of the students were African-American and three were European-American. Five of the nine were male students. Six of the students (whose names have been changed) are featured in the case illustration.*

### Session One

We bridged the prescreening with the first session by asking participants to share what they wanted to change. This structure is important because, according to Yalom (1995), in the initial stage, groups seek structure, are dependent on the leader, and explore boundaries. As the students shared what brought them to the group, we focused on their beliefs about the difficulties rather than their complaints. Their perception of the concern indicated the degree to which change was possible. The language they chose was also significant, particularly the labels. The following two girls shared complaints having a similar theme, although their beliefs differed greatly.

Anne: "I want to change my relationship with my father. I hadn't seen my father since I was 10, and then this summer when he called me it was like I didn't know what to say because I hadn't talked to him for a long time."

Barb: "My father does me wrong. He betrayed me. He took other people over me. He took his girlfriend over me. He betrayed me every which way. He took his girlfriend over his own daughter!"

Two of the boys spoke about relationships as well. Although Andrew conveyed some hope for change, it appeared that Bobby resigned himself to accept things as they were. They both used labels, and in addition Bobby described himself as dirt.

Andrew: "I wish I had a better relationship with my brother. My brother, he was saying stuff and forgetting about it. He's an alcoholic and does drugs and stuff, and I don't really like that. He's the only brother I got so I'm trying to get along with him."

Bobby: "I would like to change how the older kids treat new kids 'cuz some of them treat us like dirt. And every time when they're playing a game and some new kids want to play they won't let us because we're new and stuff."

The degree to which these students perceived they had control over the circumstances in their lives varied greatly. While Bobby wanted to change the older kids, Andrew recognized that although he could not change his brother, he could possibly change their relationship.

Casey expressed feeling totally out of control when he shared: "I would like to change my memories, because three years ago my brother shot himself... and I get flashbacks, and I want to change it because it scares me."

We ended the session by asking the participants to be "on the lookout" during the following week for things that they do that they would like to happen more often.

## Session Two

Casey's movement in session two illustrates the gradual process of goal setting. We began the session by following up on what the students decided they would like to see happen. Casey responded by saying:

"I thought of all the good times me and my brother had because I was in Cub Scouts and my brother was in Boy Scouts. We had fun together and I just thought about that and kept on going, kept on moving on."

After processing the task, we set the scene for establishing goals by giving the following hypothetical situation (de Shazer, 1988, p.5):

"Suppose that one night, while you were asleep, there was a miracle, and this problem was solved. How would you know? What would be different?"

In response Casey said: "The miracle would bring my brother back. I would do stuff more than I ever did with him. If it would happen it would solve all my problems, and then it would be perfect."

We processed the responses to the hypothetical question and moved the group members to the present reality by saying, "Now that we have an idea of what you would like to be different, and since miracles aren't likely, tell us what you will be doing to get these changes to happen."

Casey responded: "I thought since I'm in scouts it might help me forget about it (brother shooting himself) and since I'm in here (the group) it might help me get it out of my mind. Not totally but mostly out of my mind."

At this second stage of group development (Yalom, 1995) members move from acceptance of and commitment to the group, to conflict and hostility. Students at this point can get impatient with each other and become stuck in unproductive behavior such as advice giving. As in this example, hypothetical questioning not only helped students better define their goal, but it helped to facilitate group movement.

We ended the session with encouragement, and each student was given a goal sheet (found on page 117) on which to write a goal which was to begin, "I will be...".

## Session Three

After the students shared their goals we helped them to restate them as process goals. We noticed that students gradually altered their goals so that they were within their realm of control. For example, Barb apparently realized that she could not get her father to leave his girlfriend so she changed to something within her control—her relationships at school.

Barb: "I will be getting along better with other kids by minding my own business and keeping my mind on my school work."

Although both Andrew and Casey realized they could not change the situations concerning their brothers, they both chose to do those things that were within their control.

Andrew: "I'll be dwelling on the good stuff and what I like to do like football instead of thinking about my brother."

Casey: "I will be trying to be a good scout like my brother by helping the scouts in my patrol better. I'll be helping them prepare for the camping trip that we're going on next weekend and listening to them when they have questions."

Both Andrew and Casey discovered a similar solution (or "skeleton key" which we introduce to them in session four). They found they needed to "do something different." They became involved in activities, such as football and scouts, instead of dwelling on things over which they had no control.

Anne, too, realized that if she wanted to attain her goal of changing her relationship with her father that she would have to do something different. This resulted from her discovery of an exception. She realized that when she listens to her father they are not arguing, and subsequently they get along better.

Anne: "I will be having a better relationship with my father and changing my attitude. I can start going over to his house during holidays and talking and listening to him without arguing with him all the time."

In an effort to help Casey uncover an exception we asked him, "What are you doing when you aren't having flashbacks about your brother?"

He responded: "Keeping busy. I haven't had so many since we've been talking and since I've been in scouts. I haven't had that many bad memories."

It was apparent that Casey had made a 180 degree turn. Previously he had desperately tried not to think about his brother. Ironically, when he deliberately thought about his brother he was rewarded with good memories, and his flashbacks diminished. We acknowledged the efforts the students made in coming up with process goals and the gains they had already made. We encouraged them to continue to find solutions in the next week.

## Session Four

We began session four with a discussion of skeleton keys. We held up a skeleton key and asked the students what they are used for. In the discussion of their use, students understood the analogy between skeleton keys and solutions in that solutions can be used to "unlock" the difficulties that they are having. They also realized that one solution can apply in various situations and with different people.

We pointed out some of the solutions we saw students using and encouraged them to share the "skeleton keys" that they recognized other group members using. To make the exercise more concrete, we used skeleton keys (they can be actual keys or keys made out of paper.) As one member pointed out a solution that he or she found another member using, the first member handed the second member a skeleton key. As participants affirmed each other for the solutions found and offered encouragement it became evident that they were in Yalom's (1995) third stage. For example, Casey helped Barb recognize that when she "held herself back" it had prevented her from getting into a fight.

Barb: "I have problems with my temper so to keep me from hitting this kid in my class I started shaking and doing all kinds of weird stuff."

Counselor: "You stayed out of a fight by doing something different."

Barb: "I didn't see it as an improvement when I held myself back because if I hold myself back that weird stuff will happen more often."

Casey: "I think it was an improvement. Instead of hitting, you did something else. Before, I used to see you hitting instead of holding yourself back. So I think that is an improvement."

It is interesting to note that there is an element of social interest in all of the above goals. Andrew is involving himself with others through football while Casey is taking on a helping role through scouts. Anne is developing a better relationship with her father by visiting him more often and listening to him. Barb, who previously put her energy into being angry with her father, is beginning to put more effort into being more restrained with the students around her.

## Session Five

De Shazer and Molnar (1984) have identified several obstacles that individuals encounter as they progress toward their goals. In this session, as participants shared their progress, we assessed which obstacle, if any, they were faced with and made an appropriate intervention through an activity we entitled, "Obstacle course." The activity is described on Notebook page 120. In the activity the following individuals showed progress, and we encouraged them to continue doing more of what they were already doing.

Casey: "Instead of me hollering at everybody I just tell the leader what's going wrong and who's doing it. I help them (the Cub Scouts) more than I ever did, so I'm being a better scout leader."

Anne: "I'm going to my dad's at Thanksgiving, and I'm going to see him for two weeks at Christmas."

Bobby: "I've made a lot of friends. Things are going a little better, a lot better really. I was just playing and having fun. Playing football and basketball. Just doing things kids do."

Andrew: "I sort of met my goals. I just carry on with my life. I didn't really think about anything this week except my school work and football. So I didn't really think of anything bad. It was all good stuff."

Two girls seemed to be somewhat "stuck" and we told them, "Between now and the next time we meet observe in your life what you want to continue." This is opposite of what they are expecting. They expect that circumstances will remain static. Barb, for example, was "stuck."

Barb: "I'm trying to keep my mind on my school work. Sometimes I'm stuck on other things than my school work. Sometimes I still have problems with other kids."

## Subsequent Sessions and Termination

Subsequent sessions and the termination session are summarized in outlines that follow. In the termination session participants shared what they learned about the solution-focused process:

Chrissy: "How to trust people better. I learned that when other people have problems you can probably help them with the problems in here."

Anne: "I learned that other people have similar problems that I do, and some people have more problems and some have less...ways to solve all kinds of problems."

| | |
|---|---|
| Barb: | "I learned how to open up to other people and talk and get all our feelings out." |
| Bobby: | "I learned that, some people, they can change how they live if they really want to." |
| Casey: | "I learned also instead of keeping a problem inside you and making more problems, that you should talk about it and keep problems from building up inside of you...making you scared." |
| Andrew: | "The thing I learned is, you don't always have to forget about a problem. You can just change the way you think about it. Instead of avoiding a problem you can just think good things instead of bad." |

### *Counselor Participation and Modeling*

I (Garner) have seen the benefits to both myself and the students when I participated in setting a process goal for myself in the solution-focused group while I was leading it. In one group I shared that I had allowed myself to become somewhat of a "workaholic," by working through lunch, not taking breaks, and generally not being able to say "no" to most requests. My process goal was, "I will be taking a half hour lunch break each day and going for a walk outside to get myself out of the office." We discussed that it was a baby step before I would actually be able to stay in my office and take a break without getting involved in something.

The students enjoyed encouraging me and noticing me working on my process goal. They enjoyed using a solution-focused mindset on me. When one student saw me working during the lunch hour she said, "Exactly when are you going to start on your goal?" That was certainly a motivation for me to begin the goal that day! As time progressed, students said, "I saw you outside today for a change!" One girl took my hand on her way to the gym and said, "Why don't you walk with me there? That way you're sure to do your goal today." As a solution-focused participant, I felt a sense of pride that I belonged to a group that was encouraging me, and I could use the polyocularity of the group to see my difficulty from a new angle, especially when one boy said, "You not taking a break every day is just plain crazy!" How could I disagree?

## Conclusion

Although the groups may not reach the intensity of the mature work groups as described by Yalom (1995), because of their brief nature, they seem promising as a context for goal achievement for students and as an efficient means for school counselors to serve the students to which they are assigned.

In a study that we did involving 311 students, those in the solution-focused groups reported significantly higher levels of self-esteem in areas outside of academics such as social, recreational, and athletic, as opposed to students in control groups (results in their entirety are reported in LaFountain, Garner, & Eliason, 1996). Likewise, their assessments were significantly higher in self-perception scores regarding their feelings and attitudes about themselves. It is not surprising that no significant differences were found on an academic scale, since most students in the groups chose to work on non-academic goals. Students in the solution-focused groups also reported more appropriate coping behavior with emotions such as anxiety and depression. This may be related to the group's focus on action toward solutions rather than dwelling on feelings.

In a one-year follow-up study of the school counselors we trained in the solution-focused method, we found that out of the original 57 counselors, 20 had adopted the solution-focused model. On the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach, 1986) solution-focused counselors scored significantly higher in personal accomplishment than the other counselors. Likewise, the solution-focused counselors' level of depersonalization (the tendency to treat students in a mechanical fashion) was significantly lower. There was no difference in terms of emotional exhaustion (LaFountain & Garner, 1996).

# Prescreening Form

Date

Name

Grade

What would he/she like to change or do differently?

Ability to cooperate in a group

Comments:

NOTEBOOK

## Group Session 1

(Chapter 7)

**Materials Needed:**

- Name tags (optional)
- Liquid Marker
- Newsprint
- "Find Someone Who..." form
- Pencils

**Objectives:**

- For students to get acquainted in the group and with group rules and procedures.
- To set the tone for interaction.
- For students to share what they want to change in their lives.

**Procedures:**

1. **Brief introductions.**

2. **Group rules:** list the rules on newsprint as the group members brainstorm them.

3. **Ice-breaker:** refer to Notebook page 26 and the student version for "Find Someone Who... " found on page 114.

4. **Processing: say something like, "By doing this exercise we have discovered that we are similar in many ways, and one additional way is that we all have something in mind that we want to change or do differently." Encourage them to share what they discussed in the prescreening by asking, "What would you like to change or do differently in your life?"**
   A. Listening Strategies: make an initial hypothesis to yourself regarding each student's:
      1. belief about the situation.
      2. language: use of labels and absolutes.
      3. life style.
      4. private logic or common sense.
      5. presentation of any exceptions.

   B. Responding Strategies:
      1. Do not attend to comments that encourage continued complaining.
      2. Use less disturbed language when reflecting (i.e., *discouraged* instead of *depressed*; *eats too much at times* instead of *overeats*) to reframe the situation into a more behavioral perspective.
      3. Reflect qualifiers when students use absolutes (i.e., *always* instead of *frequently*).
         Student: *My mom and I always argue.*
         Counselor: *You and your mom argue frequently, but what's happening when you aren't arguing?*
      4. Reflect contradictions.
         Student: *I'm too stupid to do that.*
         Counselor: *Isn't it interesting that you call yourself stupid, but your report card shows a 'B' average?*

5. **Encouragement and Homework:**
   A. Acknowledge that the students have contributed to the session by interacting and sharing what they would like to change or do differently.
   B. Direct them by saying, "This week notice what you are doing, that you'd like to see happen more often."

Counselor Notes (from hypotheses made in section 4A):

Name Belief about situation as demonstrated by language used, life style, private logic, and exceptions.

## Find Someone Who...

...is born in the same month: ______________________________

...likes the same style of music: ______________________________

...shares your first name initial: ______________________________

...has the same number of brothers or sisters: ______________________________

...has the same type of pet(s): ______________________________

...enjoys the same favorite food: ______________________________

...likes the same season: ______________________________

...pursues the same hobby or sport: ______________________________

...is in the same grade: ______________________________

NOTEBOOK

## Group Session 2

(Chapter 7)

**Materials Needed:**

- Goal sheet (form on p. 117)
- Group rules from Session 1
- Pencils

**Objective:**

- To help students establish a process goal.

**Procedure:**

1. **Homework Review:** Ask the group, "What did you do this past week that you'd like to see happen more?" Initially target those who had potential goals within their control.
   A. To students who identify changes, ask them some of the following (while encouraging group members to ask similar questions):

      "What did you do to get that to happen?"

      "How do you get that to happen?"

      "What did you do differently?"

      "What did you change?"

   B. To students who do not identify changes, ask them some of the following (while encouraging group members to ask similar questions):

      "Remind us of what changes you wanted to happen."

      "Tell us about a time when it happened a little bit."

      "If you changed the place or time would it help?"

2. **Goal setting:**
   A. State that since the group members have a better idea of what people want to change in their lives, next they will do some activities related to goal setting.
   B. Ask the group what a goal is and encourage students to share responses.

3. **Hypothetical situation:** the scene is set for the establishment of goals by giving the following hypothetical situation:

   "Suppose that tonight while you are asleep there is a miracle and the problem is solved. How would you know? What would you be doing differently?"

   Encourage students to share their responses.

4. **A realistic goal:** tell the group:

   "Now that we have an idea of what you would like different, and since miracles aren't likely, tell us what YOU WILL BE DOING to get that to happen?"

   Encourage students to share their responses.

   A. To students who are having difficulty coming up with a response, encourage them with the following:

      "If I were a fly on the wall and watching you, what would I see you doing differently?"

      "If this were the last group meeting and you were walking out of here with the difficulty solved, or were at least on track to solving it, what would you be doing differently?"

   B. To students who do not think they will be doing anything differently, ask:

      "What do you think you might be saying to yourself or someone else that is different?"

   C. To students who maintain that they will not be doing anything differently and that it is someone else, e.g., parent, who will be doing something differently, ask:

      "What will your parents say that you are doing differently?"

5. **Encouragement and Homework:** Offer encouragement to the group and give out the goal sheet. Direct the students to come up with a process goal for next week that begins with "I will be...(+ action verb)." Ask them to give some examples of what a process goal sounds like, so that they are sure of how to write their own. On the goal sheet, they can use the rings of the target to write down the steps that they are taking during the week towards their goal.

NAME ______________________________

# I Will Be...

## Group Session 3

(Chapter 7)

**Materials Needed:**
- Goal sheets

**Objective:**
- To help students clarify their process goals.

**Procedure:**

1. **Students share their process goals.** Silently assess the students' goals according to the criteria of a process goal and when necessary help students to restate their individual goals to meet the criteria of:
   A. Positive presentation.
   B. Process goal form: "I will be...(+ action verb)"
   C. In the here and now.
   D. Specific.
   E. Within student's control.
   F. In the student's language.

(You may want to write down the goals for your records.)

Name Process Goal

2. **Encouragement and Homework:** Offer encouragement to the group members for their effort in forming process goals.

## Group Session 4
(Chapter 7)

**Materials Needed:**

- Skeleton keys (either one construction paper skeleton key for each student, or one real skeleton key for each student. We have found real keys inexpensively at department stores).

**Objective:**

- To help students identify solutions (keys to solving their difficulties).

**Procedure:**

1. **Skeleton key:** hold up a skeleton key and ask the students what skeleton keys are used for (elicit that one skeleton key can fit many locks). Summarize that the intent in the group is to help the students find some skeleton keys to help unlock or "solve" the areas in which they are experiencing difficulties. In some cases it might be discovered that "One key fits all."
   A. Explain that one key is looking for exceptions. Give an example of when a student shared an exception (i.e., the one boy was not discouraged about his relationship with his brother when he played football).
   B. Ask the group members to share a time this week when they were doing part of their process goal. Encourage the student and group members to try to identify what the key was that helped it happen. Once a student identifies the "key" that he or she used hand him or her a skeleton key to symbolize the solution.
   C. The following questions can be asked to help draw out the students:

      "What did you do to get that to happen?"
      "How do you get that to happen?"
      "What did you do differently?"
      "What did you change?"

      *(Note: The tone of voice can also make some questions appear like compliments: "How did you get that to happen!")*

   D. The students may discover many keys such as: exceptions, taking small steps, doing something 180 degrees different. Process and generalize the keys that are discovered. Another key to encourage students to try is that of pretending. Pretending - "To act as if":

      *Instruct the students that sometimes if they pretend they can do something and they try it, they find that they can. An example might be the case of a student who wants to do well in a class but feels bored in that class. If thatstudent pretends to be interested the student may find that the class in fact seems more interesting. Ask how this would apply to anyone in the group.*

2. **Encouragement and Homework:** Offer encouragement to the group members and direct the students to look for the skeleton keys (solutions) that they use toward their goal.

NOTEBOOK

## Group Session 5

(Chapter 7)

**Materials Needed:**

- A symbolic obstacle course (described below).

**Objective:**

- For students to identify progress toward their goals.
- For those students who are stuck to get assistance.

**Procedure:**

1. **Ask students what an obstacle course is. Discuss.**

2. **Show students a symbolic obstacle course and explain that it will be used in their discussion of how they are doing toward their goals.**
   A. You can establish any kind of symbolic obstacle course. In the fall, for example, you can say, "Imagine that you go running in the woods and you encounter various obstacles in your path—nature has created 'an obstacle course.' You may come across rocks, leaves, logs, and mud."
   B. Show them the symbolic obstacle course you created. (In this case have a box in which you have collected rocks, leaves, twigs (to represent logs) and hunks of clay (to represent mud). Do not tell students at this point what each item symbolizes.
      Note: In this example:
      Leaves represent making good progress.
      Mud (clay) represents being a little stuck.
      Rocks represent that the person feels he or she has used up all options.
      Logs (twigs) represent that the person "is tripped up" and feels out of control.

3. **Students share their goals.**
   A. Encourage feedback and interchange.
   B. Assess students' progress.

4. **Give a directive to each student after he or she shares his or her progress.**
   A. Tell students who are progressing to pick up a leaf.
   B. Tell students who are a little stuck to pick up the clay.
   C. Tell students who feel they have run out of options to pick up a rock.
   D. Tell students who say that they are impulsive or can't control their urges to pick up a stick.

5. **Ask the students if they figured out what the symbols stand for.**

6. **Processes the exercise by saying:**
   A. "Those of you who picked up leaves are to continue to do more of what you are already doing."
   B. "Those of you who picked up clay mud are to do the following: Between now and next time I want you to observe in your life what you want to continue." (This is opposite of what student is expecting - they expect that circumstances will remain static.)
   C. "Those of you who picked up a rock are to do something different."
   D. "Those of you who picked up a stick are to do the following: Before we meet again, pay attention to what you do to overcome the temptation or urge."

7. **Encouragement.** Offer encouragement to the group members and have the students review what they are supposed to do for the week.

NOTEBOOK

## Termination Session

(Chapter 7)

**Materials Needed:**
- Refreshments (optional)

**Objective:**
- To help students review the skills they have learned.
- To help students continue the progress they are making.
- To celebrate change.

**Procedure:**

1. **Ask students to share their progress as it relates to their goal.** (Activities such as the scaling exercise can be used.) Encourage group members to share feedback.

2. **Ask students to tell what they have learned in the group and have them speak of the possible obstacles they will face in the future.**

3. **Encourage students on their changes and encourage them to support each other in the future.**

4. **Celebrate change with refreshments (optional).**

| Solution-focused counseling | Adlerian counseling |
|---|---|
| beliefs | Adlerian consultation |
| process goals | Adlerian parenting |
| Solution-focused consultation | family meeting |
| | goals of misbehavior |
| | I-messages |
| | logical consequences |
| | natural consequences |

# CHAPTER 8

# Responsive Services: Solution-Focused/Adlerian Consultation

*Maria shook her head in disbelief as she looked over her monthly report. This past month she conducted sixteen consultations with teachers, held five face-to-face consultations with parents, facilitated four parenting meetings, and was involved in eight team meetings. She smiled to herself at how naive she probably appeared in her admission interview for the counseling program ten years ago. When the professor had asked her why she was choosing to go into school counseling she had responded that she loved children and wanted to work with them. Little did she know how necessary it would be to become involved with the adults in the lives of the children she would serve.*

## Introduction

School counselors at all levels are confronted with large caseloads, increasing demands by their administrators, and limited clerical assistance (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994). In a time management study that I (LaFountain, 1993) conducted with a random sample of approximately 9% of the school counselors in Pennsylvania (N=300), one counselor reported as many as 1,569 students on his caseload. The purpose of the study was to determine if there was a relationship between the way counselors spend their time (e.g., classroom guidance, individual counseling, group counseling, crisis counseling, consultation, system support) and their level of burnout. Other variables, such as: caseload size, level at which the counselor counseled, age of the counselor, and years of counseling experience, were also assessed. No one variable was statistically significant in determining the counselor's level of burnout. The most significant outcome of the study was finding school counselors feel the most stressed when asked to perform duties in which they feel ill-prepared. The two areas in which they reported feeling least prepared were group counseling and consultation. Counselors need to be trained and encouraged in these areas since these functions are services that counselors should be prepared to provide students in a time-effective manner. Group counseling, as described in Chapter Seven, is a direct service to students. Consultation is an indirect means of responding to students' needs.

We define consultation as an intervention in which the consultant (the school counselor) assists the consultee (the parent or teacher) in working with the student. In consultation the goal is to effectively share knowledge and skills with the consultee so that he or she, rather than the consultant, can directly effect change. For example, in Chapter One, the counselor assisted the mother in finding a solution that the mother could use to help her middle school daughter become more responsible. The counselor could have opted to work directly with the student on study skills and responsibility, but instead the counselor worked indirectly by entrusting the mother with the skills. This decision has many ramifications; not only is it most efficient in terms of the counselor's time, the mother also learns skills in the process. Another benefit to consultation is the "ripple effect." It is likely that the mother will use these new skills in other aspects of her parenting.

We make a distinction between consulting and conferring. While consulting involves the consultant transferring knowledge or skills to assist the consultee, conferring is limited to the exchanging of information. An example of conferring is when a counselor, at the request of a parent, tells a teacher that a student in his or her classroom has been diagnosed with AD/HD and that the child will be taking Ritalin. Consultation occurs when, in addition, the counselor shares with the teacher some classroom strategies for dealing with the child. Conferring does not always have to be counselor-initiated. A teacher updating the counselor on a student's recent grades or behavior is teacher-initiated conferring.

## Adlerian Consultation

According to Sweeney (1989), Adlerian consultation involves: a) at least three persons (the consultant, the consultee, and the consultee's child or student); b) a situation in which individuals could benefit from a third party's view and knowledge; c) an egalitarian, collaborative relationship into which the consultee enters voluntarily and chooses whether or not to follow the recommendations; and d) facilitative conditions such as genuineness, caring, empathy, and confrontation.

Kern and Mullis (1993) developed a consultation model for school counselors based on Dreikurs' diagnostic procedure for identifying a child's purpose for behavior (Dreikurs et al., 1971). The model is described below and later illustrated through a scenario which also includes solution-focused strategies.

The first phase in Kern and Mullis' (1993) consultation model is the structuring of the interview which involves stating the amount of time available, naming the child to be discussed, and using active listening skills so that the consultee feels heard. The second phase centers around identifying the goal of the child's misbehavior. This goal is assessed by the counselor asking the consultee what he or she thinks the problem is, how the consultee feels toward the child when the child is misbehaving, and how the child responds to corrective action. In addition, the counselor gains further information by asking how the child relates with other children in a variety of settings and about the child's strengths and weaknesses. When a consultee is somewhat resistant, or if the counselor wants additional information, the counselor asks a metaphorical question, "If you were to compare this child with an animal in the jungle, what would the animal be?" The consultee's response will provide valuable information on how he or she feels about the child and the child's strengths and weaknesses. Finally, the counselor summarizes the information learned about the child's behavior which leads to the identification of the child's goal in phase three.

The third phase involves goal disclosure, which includes the identification of the child's goal of misbehavior, which behaviors the consultee finds most distressing about the child, and which one behavior the consultee would most like to change. In phase four the emphasis is on the consultee changing in an effort to bring about change in the student. First the counselor asks the consultee what he or she has tried and what the consultee thinks might work. Together the counselor and the consultee brainstorm alternatives, the consultee chooses the intervention he or she will try, and the consultee states the intervention in a process goal.

In conclusion, the counselor summarizes what the consultee will do, closes the interview, and schedules a follow-up session. The counselor encourages the consultee through the implementation stage and follows up as necessary.

In this consultation model, as well as most others, the consultee is the one who initially has to make some changes. System theory tells us that as one person in a system changes, others are likely to follow.

## Solution-Focused Consultation

As described in Chapter One, the solution-focused approach is a single approach. Therefore, counselors will follow the same approach in consultation that they do in counseling. Initially they will ask the consultee what it is they want to change or do differently. While the consultee shares the desired change, the counselor actively listens for the consultee's beliefs, language, and any exceptions. The counselor responds by helping the consultee to relabel the language. Next the counselor uses his or her knowledge and skills to help the consultee arrive at a solution. Exceptions are capitalized upon as possible keys to solutions. The counselor also helps the consultee to look at his or her strengths as well as solutions that are already working. Often the counselor will encourage the consultee to do something different. When the consultee decides upon the alternative the counselor encourages the consultee in the process and sets a time for follow-up.

## Case Illustration

The following case illustration is a modified version of an actual consultation between LaFountain and a new teacher, Natasha. Natasha is an itinerant teacher—she offers enrichment to each of the classes in her elementary building one half-hour per week. The classroom teachers use Natasha's class time as a planning period. Natasha is struggling with some discipline issues for a number of reasons. Since she is with each class for such a limited amount of time each week she states that she hates spending a lot of time on discipline. She also has expressed that if she had her own classroom she knows how she would like to run it, but she is having some difficulty dealing with so many different classes coming to her with well-established expectations. Her immediate concern in this consultation is Andre, a first grader, who is disruptive. A solution-focused/Adlerian approach is used in this consultation.

C: Natasha, we have about 15 minutes—will that be enough time to talk about what you would like to change or do differently regarding Andre? *(Counselor structures the interview.)*

T: That will be fine. Andre is a wonderful child, a real dear. He's frustrating to me because he's always doing something to get attention on himself—either things to get the kids across the circle to laugh at him, or he interrupts. *(Counselor notices the teacher's use of labels: "dear" and "frustrating;" absolutes: "always doing something...;" and beliefs: Natasha believes he craves attention.)*

C: It sounds like you are really torn because you like Andre but at times he disrupts what you are trying to do in class.

T: With his behavior he interrupts lessons, and then I have to get everyone else back on track—and it gets tedious.

C: What kind of response is he getting from other kids? *(Counselor elicits more beliefs.)*

T: It depends. Some of the kids laugh. Some of the others have begun leaning over and saying, "Andre, you're not supposed to do that." They try to steer him straight.

C: How does he respond to them trying to "steer him straight"?

T: He listens to them for a short amount of time, and then he's back at something else.

C: What kind of corrective action have you taken? How has he responded?

T: I ask him if he's made a good choice with his behavior. When he says "No," I talk with him about what he could do to make it a good choice. We talked about him taking time out from the group.

C: When you talk to him about a good choice, does he know appropriate behavior?

T: Yes, and that's the most frustrating, because he's aware that he shouldn't be doing what he ends up doing.

C: You mentioned talking to him about leaving the group. Is that an option, or is it more of a threat?

T: More of an alternative. If his behavior continues, he is going to have to leave the group.

C: Is he able to get his behavior under control?

T: For a period of time—yes.

C: How long is that period of time?

**T:** 10 - 15 minutes.

**C:** Do you find yourself having to remind him again?

**T:** Yes.

**C:** That must be frustrating, because you have to take away from the whole class to correct him. Have you observed him anywhere else— like on the playground or in the lunchroom?

**T:** Yes, he seems to get along well with his classmates. Typically, he has a good sense of humor and his friends seem to enjoy that. When he starts doing something he isn't supposed to they seem to pull away from him.

**C:** This might be a different kind of question for you, but if you were to picture him as an animal, what would he be? *(This question is most often used when the consultee is having difficulty responding to questions, although in this case the teacher is doing quite well.)*

**T:** It would probably be a cute little monkey. The ones that are so cute that they run off with someone else's banana or jump from tree to tree.

**C:** Again, you bring out that you find him cute and charming, but the behavior is frustrating you. Do you think you would be handling him any differently if you didn't find him so cute and charming?

**T:** I don't think so. I really love all the children. I think I'm a little more lenient than I should be, though.

**C:** I wonder why you allow yourself to be lenient?

**T:** Well, since I only have the class one period a week I don't want them to dislike it.

**C:** What do you think Andre's motive for his behavior is? Are you familiar with the four goals of misbehavior?

**T:** Somewhat.

**C:** *(Counselor spends a few minutes reviewing Dreikurs' goals of misbehavior.)* Which sounds like Andre?

**T:** Probably "getting attention"—maybe a little bossiness, too. But mostly getting attention, and it's kind of odd because afterwards he apologizes for it. *(The counselor knows that the reaction the teacher has toward the child can be a clue to the goal of the misbehavior. The counselor remembers that earlier the teacher mentioned that she felt frustrated—a form of annoyance—suggesting it was the goal of attention. But the counselor also recognizes that the teacher might be minimizing her feelings since she wanted so much to appear that she loved the children. The counselor wonders whether the teacher was angry. If that were the case the mistaken goal would be power.)*

**C:** It's interesting that you threw in "bossiness" too, because he is in control at that time when he stops the entire class to get your attention. So, he really is in control. Would you agree? *(Teacher nods in agreement.)* Knowing his motive might lead us into some solutions. So far you've tried talking to him, giving him reminders, and offering him the possibility of time out. Can you tell me more about telling him he may have to leave the circle if it happens again?

**T:** I tell him if the inappropriate behavior continues, he will have to leave the circle. He then is very sorry for his behavior, and he sits down quietly and listens. I think maybe that a better way to handle it would be to talk to him and tell him he'll have one more chance and then he'll have to leave the circle.

**C:** *(The counselor recognizes that the teacher is afraid of being disliked. The counselor wants to try to help her find something that has worked for her in the past.)* I'm curious why you would give him one more warning and then decide to send him out?

**T:** Because I see this class only once a week, and I want them to enjoy it.

**C:** It sounds like a goal for you is to find a strategy that works and that is still respectful of the children so they will respect you.

**T:** Yes, I want to keep the class under control in a way that shows respect. I don't want to yell and scream. *(Although the teacher did not state the goal in process form the counselor decides to continue on with the hope that the process goal would become clearer as more solutions were generated. The counselor is also aware of the likelihood that the teacher was angry—but that she did not want to express her anger.)*

**C:** What would that look like? When was a time that you felt you managed a classroom respectfully?

**T:** By talking one-on-one. That seems to work. I don't really want to yell because I don't really think he means anything. He has a tendency to forget. So mostly a reminder would work for him. *(The counselor notes that the teacher is excusing the behavior with forgetting.)*

**C:** How could you use one-on-one in this case?

**T:** Well, I just thought of something else I mean by one-on-one. Maybe I could give each child a few moments at the start of each class to share something. Then Andre, as well as the rest of the class, will each feel like they got a little attention.

**C:** Is that the type of attention he is after? Does he want to tell you about his week?

**T:** Not actually. He likes to interrupt others.

**C:** Any other ideas about how you could use one-on-one with Andre?

**T:** Well, like I said, I could talk to him one-on-one and tell him he has one more chance and that's it.

**C:** You also mentioned that you've talked with him about good choices. I'm wondering if you could talk with him one-on-one and give him a choice. *(The counselor brings in choices for two reasons: 1] she wants to find solutions that the teacher already has in her vocabulary, and 2] since Natasha was beginning to see the child's goal as power, she knew that offering choices was an appropriate solution.)*

**T:** What do you mean?

**C:** In Adlerian philosophy we emphasize giving children choices with the understanding that they will need to be responsible for their choices. You could use an individual conference to tell him that he has a choice of participating appropriately and staying in the circle or speaking out and having to separate himself for a while. Then in the event he speaks out you can turn to him and say, "Andre, I see you've chosen to go to your seat for five minutes." What do you think would happen?

**T:** He'd probably say, "Oh please, please, I didn't mean it. I'll sit here and be quiet."

**C:** If you would carry it out I think it would be an instance of where actions speak louder than words. The way you state it is very important so that he doesn't see it as an argument or power struggle. It would be great if in your conference you could both discuss and agree on how much time he needs to get back on track. How would that be for you to try that?

**T:** It'd be worth a try. And I think giving him a say in it will be helpful because he'll have more power in it.

**C:** So we've talked about you giving each child a moment to share something at the beginning of class; you talking with him one-on-one and telling him he'll have one more chance; or you talking with him about choices. Which one would you like to try the next time you see that class?

**T:** I think I'll try the sharing so that everyone gets a little attention, and if that doesn't work I'll talk to him individually about choices.

**C:** *(The counselor realizes that the teacher is taking a less threatening approach, but the counselor acknowledges the teacher's effort to try something new in "baby steps.")* So you want to take one step at a time.

**T:** Right.

**C:** I know you are really interested in Andre and what will benefit the whole class. When do you meet with them again?

**T:** Tuesday.

**C:** How about if we meet again next Thursday, and we can talk about what happened that you want to happen more. *(The counselor attempts to be positive but leaves the door open for the possibility that the teacher encounters obstacles in her path. The counselor realizes that the solution that the teacher chose is in line with her lifestyle of pleasing others. Also the solution is appropriate if the mistaken goal is attention. The counselor tends to think the goal of misbehavior is power since it evokes anger in the teacher, although the teacher is having difficulty admitting it. The counselor believes it is too early in their consultation relationship for the counselor to confront the teacher on her fear of admitting anger and being disliked.)*

The following Thursday the teacher and counselor met and discussed whether or not giving each child a moment to share had helped Andre to control himself throughout the rest of the lesson. Natasha was somewhat discouraged because even though Andre enjoyed being in the limelight when he shared about his week, he interrupted some of the other children when they took their turns. Natasha agreed that she needed to have a one-on-one discussion with Andre and give him choices. As Natasha took more risks in classroom management she slowly gained more confidence. The counselor no longer felt it was necessary to confront her on her fear of being disliked.

## Consultation with Parents and Teachers through Classes

### *Consulting through Classes*

Parent education classes and teacher effectiveness groups can be considered consultation services since counselors share skills and strategies that assist these adults in effecting change in children. These services are considered responsive when offered to select parents and teachers who are experiencing difficulty. They can also be considered part of the curriculum when made available to all parents and teachers as a regular developmental program. In addition, when an entire school or district gets trained in a discipline approach in order to adopt the approach district-wide, this is part of the system support component (described in Chapter Nine). We advocate that counselors offer the classes to everyone and make a special effort to encourage those adults with whom they have consulted on an individual basis to attend. This section deals specifically with parent education classes; while teacher effectiveness groups, which promote system support, are discussed in Chapter Nine. Both interventions are similar in that they are time-effective and offer skills and support to the adults.

The time counselors initially invest in their own training and preparation in parent education eventually pays off in the multitude of parents that they can serve through this medium. Numerous published parenting programs and accompanying trainings are available for counselors to facilitate counselors in their initial step in the process. Many Adlerian-based parenting programs are available such as: Active Parenting Today (Popkin, 1992); Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (Dinkmeyer et al., 1997); and Raising Kids who Can (Bettner & Lew, 1996b).

### *Practical Issues in Offering Parenting Classes*

Counselors often wrestle with the best way to fit parenting classes into their schedules and issues regarding compensation. To best serve the parents the most optimal time is to offer the classes in the evenings and to provide child-care in a nearby room. This accommodation can usually be arranged through a high school service club, honor society, or home economics club. From time to time it is appropriate to offer a class in the daytime for those parents who work evenings or who would prefer to attend while their children are in school.

Some counselors may see the providing of parenting classes as part of their job and not hesitate to provide this service in the evening without any additional compensation, whereas other counselors may choose to seek out methods of compensation. When I (LaFountain) began offering parenting classes in a rural district in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan in the early 80's I saw it as part of my job and did it voluntarily in the evenings. There was no cost to the parents to attend the classes except for the purchase of the parent manual. The district covered the cost of the materials. I soon received requests from parents from neighboring districts to attend, and I permitted them on a space-available basis. (I consider 12 the maximum number of participants to encourage a high level of involvement.) Because of the many requests, I wrote and received a grant from the American Association of University Women, which paid me a stipend to offer the parenting groups in four surrounding rural districts and paid for the parent manuals. We encourage counselors to consider grant writing if money for start-up materials, such as kits, is an obstacle. We do know of some districts that pay counselors for conducting programs in the evenings. Another option, which I took in my most recent school counseling position, is to earn compensation time for running the groups. At first, counselors may think that there are too many roadblocks in their way for pursuing the regular offering of programs, but we encourage counselors to explore a variety of options. We also encourage counselors to demonstrate the necessity of parenting groups through a needs assessment and to gain the support of their advisory council. These approaches can only help in garnering necessary approvals to overcome certain obstacles.

We encourage counselors to develop their schedule of groups well in advance, so that the groups can be included in district calendars and counseling newsletters. It not only gives parents the opportunity to plan for the sessions, but it also legitimizes the practice of offering the classes. I (LaFountain) found six to eight meetings of two hours each to work best for parents. I had to make adaptations to the program I was using because it was designed for nine meetings. I found one first-semester offering (early October through mid-November) and two second-semester classes (mid-January through early March and early April through mid-May) to work well around holiday schedules as well as to be appropriate to the level of parental requests. Counselors need to discover what works best for their districts. We encourage counselors to make the classes available for all parents but to especially invite those parents with whom they have worked. During consultations and conferences with parents the counselor can tell parents of the upcoming classes. If the parents fail to sign up, a reminder call is appropriate. The more convinced I became with the benefits of the classes, the more assertive I became in encouraging parents to attend. As a counselor I found offering parenting classes to be extremely time-effective; parents reap many benefits as well.

## Benefits that Parents Experience through Parenting Classes

Many of the parents with whom I have worked reported that besides learning skills, they genuinely appreciated the support obtained through the participation in parenting classes. It was a relief for them to find that they were not alone in their struggles and that their feelings were normal. Yalom (1995) calls this experience "universality." As in all groups, we discussed the importance of confidentiality since some parents bring up sensitive issues. Some parents found it helpful to have a group to which they were accountable. A few parents reported that having to go back and share with the group about their week is what motivated them to try out each new skill. Still others stated that the group encouraged them during a time when they were feeling discouraged. Encouragement is the basis of Adlerian parenting programs.

## Adlerian Parenting Programs

As discussed earlier, Adler was a pioneer in parent education through the Child Guidance Clinics that he established early in the twentieth century. He was also the forerunner in "self help" books, and he wrote extensively for lay persons, particularly regarding parenting issues. His ideas were furthered by Dreikurs, who gained acclaim in the field of child psychiatry (Hoffman, 1994). Adlerian parenting classes are based on Adler's democratic principles and the practical applications of Dreikurs.

Common to the democratic Adlerian parenting programs are the concepts of: mutual respect, responsible parenting, communication skills, goals of misbehavior, understanding who owns the problem, I-messages, natural and logical consequences, brainstorming alternatives (or solutions), and family meetings. The concept of responsible parenting challenges parents to consider if their behavior is motivated by trying to appear like the "good" parent in others' eyes, or if they are attempting to develop responsibility in their children. When parents understand "who owns the problem," they know in which direction to go with their child. For instance, if the child owns the problem, e.g., the child is having difficulty with a friend, the parent learns to use active listening skills to allow the child to feel heard and understood. In instances where the parent owns the problem, e.g., the child comes home late for dinner, the parent may choose to respond with an I-message and a request: "I am disappointed when family members don't come home at the agreed upon time for dinner; please be more considerate in the future." Parents learn to use natural and logical consequences as opposed to punishment to instill within their children the social order of things. For example, the child who comes home late for dinner will experience the natural consequence of hunger if the child finds that all the food is put away and the parent says, "We'll try again tomorrow," emphasizing that snacks are off limits for the evening. There are situations where parents do not want their children to experience natural consequences when the consequence would be dangerous. In those cases, parents allow the child to experience a logical consequence, a consequence they establish which approximates the natural situation. The "Four Rs of Logical Consequences" are: Related, Respectful, Reasonable, and Revealed in advance. A father who sees his young child playing in the street may take the child by the hand and lead the child to the fenced-in backyard and say, "For the rest of the afternoon you will need to play within the safety of the fence. Tomorrow you can try again to play safely in the front yard." The examples demonstrate how important it is for the parent to stay calm when imposing a consequence. (Consequences are discussed further in Chapter Nine where Nelsen [1996] discusses a different view of consequences.)

Most Adlerian parenting courses are skill-based, where the facilitator teaches skills, helps parents practice the skills, and then encourages parents to try out the new skill with their children. We encourage counselors and advisory councils to explore a number of Adlerian programs and choose one that will best meet the district's needs. Although the programs share many commonalities, they vary in the reading level of the parent manuals, acknowledgment of cultural differences, cost, and training programs for facilitators. Since the skills taught in Adlerian-based programs are generally applicable to parents of children of all ages, we encourage districts to choose one program to use across the grade levels for consistency. This choice can be accomplished in a couple of ways: 1) Counselors can use one program across the district and make it applicable to the specific age levels through adaptation; or 2) Counselors can purchase a series of programs designed to target specific parent groups (e.g., preschool, elementary, secondary). Consistency in parenting programs across the district helps professionals and parents to speak one language.

## Integrating Solution-Focused Approaches Into the Model

We have discussed the time-effective benefits of integrating solution-focused and Adlerian approaches throughout the book. These two approaches also work well together in parent education classes. On page 133 is a model of a typical Adlerian-based parenting class. In addition, we present a model that illustrates how solution-focused approaches can be infused.

A typical first session includes parents involved in an introductory activity and sharing why they are taking the class. The "Likeness exercise" found in Chapter Two is an appropriate activity which highlights the commonalities the parents share. To encourage parents to talk about what they hope to accomplish in the group (as opposed to complaints about their children) counselors can ask, "What would you like to change or do more of?" Typically a parent notes that (for better or for worse) parents often parent the way they have been raised. Facilitators capitalize on this opportunity to promote more discussion by asking parents to share how they were raised. In order to make this discussion solution-focused (encouraging the positive), counselors could ask: "What did you see your parents do in terms of parenting that you would like to do?" The facilitator can also listen for the beliefs that the parents express about parenting. In the Adlerian class a typical first skill that the facilitator teaches is the identification of the goals of misbehavior. Parents are given the opportunity to practice the skill and are encouraged to practice the skill throughout the week. With the addition of the solution-focused approach, the assignment emphasizes what they (the parents) do to encourage positive behavior in their children. Specifically the facilitator states, "Notice this week those things that you do that you would like to make happen more in terms of encouraging positive behavior in your children."

In subsequent sessions of Adlerian programs the facilitator reviews previously learned skills, asks parents to share how they did with their homework, teaches a new skill, allows for practice, and gives an assignment. Adlerian facilitators use a great deal of encouragement throughout the process. With the solution-focused format, the facilitator conducts the sharing by asking the parents to describe what they noticed that week that they would like to continue. In session two, the facilitator additionally encourages the parents to come up with a process goal around the particular difficulty they are experiencing. As in consultation, the emphasis is on the parent changing or doing something differently to effect change in the child. Facilitators follow up on these process goals in each session.

Mrs. Rodriguez, for example, wanted to be more patient with her children. She said, "I fly off the handle at the littlest thing." When she was asked to describe a time she does not "fly off the handle" she said, "Well, at work I sometimes get really angry, but I usually walk away because I know it would only get me in trouble." With the help of the group members she came up with a process goal: "When I feel myself getting angry with my child I will walk away or count to ten." Later in the course when they learned about active listening, she was able to incorporate it into her process goal. She rephrased her process goal: "When I feel myself getting angry I will walk away, and then when I'm calm I will concentrate on listening to my child." Another example of how she was able to incorporate a new skill into her process goal was when the parents were learning about logical consequences. Her facilitator stressed the need for parents to remain calm when using logical consequences. Mrs. Rodriguez gave an example of how she constantly yelled at her children when they had the TV or CD player too loud. She realized that a better approach would be to turn off the equipment and calmly say that they could try again the next day. The group pointed out to her that she was "doing something different—180 degrees different." She incorporated logical consequences into her process goal by saying, "When I'm feeling myself getting angry I will calmly use a logical consequence."

Toward the end of the course, the parents learned about family meetings, where family members regularly sit down together and make plans and discuss concerns. The counselor told them that all of the parenting skills they have learned work equally as well in family meetings. Mrs. Rodriquez decided that she would like to establish a meeting once a week with her children. She thought that it would be helpful to discuss with them certain situations that occur on a regular basis, and ways they could prevent them from happening. They could also discuss how she would handle those situations if they would occur in the future.

In the final session of the Adlerian group the parents review the skills and their progress. A celebration is often included. With the integration of the solution-focused approach, parents review the solutions they have found and how they can continue to amplify them.

## Conferences: A Means for Collaboration

School personnel are all familiar with conferences—a time for adults to sit down together to share information about the student they have in common. Many parent-teacher conferences are mass scheduled on days that are set aside for this activity, while others are scheduled as needed. Although the information shared can be positive in nature, many people view conferences as a time where only deficiencies are discussed. We propose that conferences be used as a forum for discovering what students do well and as a time to collaborate on how the student can use strengths that he or she already possesses in the area(s) of difficulty. We find it most helpful for the student to be present at the conference (whether it be between parent-teacher or parent-counselor or teacher-counselor) so that the student can contribute to the discussion and gain ownership of any plans for change. Conferencing with the child present allows for the child to be talked "with" instead of talked "about." In the case of a parent-teacher conference, including the child discourages the parents from going home after a conference and sharing the teacher's perceptions second-hand with the child.

As mentioned previously, we see consultation as a process where the consultant transfers knowledge or skills to the consultee (usually the teacher or parent) to use with the student— which is above and beyond conferring (the exchange of knowledge). A conference that includes the student allows those involved to go beyond the sharing of information and allows for collaboration on ways to create change. This section deals with conferences between students and teachers and conferences between students and parents.

### Conferences Between Students and Teachers

Conferences between students and teachers can be initiated by either the student or teacher. The student or teacher often approaches the counselor with a complaint. The counselor who is operating out of a solution-focused/Adlerian context will suggest that all three of them get together. Metcalf (1995) provides a good opening for such an occurrence:

> Susie and Mrs. Young, I've asked you both here today because I've become aware that you have some concerns. Mrs. Young, you've been by to talk to me about your concerns for Susie. I want you both to know that I'm not going to talk about what's been going wrong...I feel you both have probably discussed that sufficiently. I'm going to talk with you instead about the times when things have been working a little better. (p. 79)

Metcalf (1995) notes that it is motivating for a student to hear teachers describe what is already working for him or her. Students are also encouraged when they realize that blaming does not occur in the meeting. The form entitled, "Conference with Student and Teacher" offers a format for counselors to follow in a student-teacher conference. The counselor acts as the facilitator and encourages a mutually respectful discussion. The counselor uses the form to record the responses. Copies can be made for each of the participants and the counselor. In the final step, when the counselor asks, "What will you do to get that to happen more?" the counselor assists the student and teacher to each make a process goal. If either the student or teacher is having difficulty, the counselor uses the insight gained through listening for their beliefs and ways they approach difficulties to assist them in coming up with a process goal and solutions.

At the end of the conference, the student and teacher should plan a time that they can meet with the counselor to evaluate how they are progressing toward their goals. The counselor uses the form, "Follow-Up to Student-Teacher Conference" in the follow-up session.

### Conferences Between Students and Parents

Conferences between students and parents can take place in this same format as well, using the guidelines "Conference with Student and Parents" and "Follow-Up to Student-Parent Conference." In the scenario from Chapter One, where the mother is upset because of her middle school-aged daughter's lack of responsibility in terms of school work, the counselor chose to consult with the mother. The following example contains the responses that the mother and daughter might come up with in the conference.

### *Conference with Student and Parent*

**What is it you would each like to see change at home?**

**Student:** I want more freedom to handle things on my own.

**Parent:** I want to find a way to monitor my daughter's homework that is appropriate for her age.

**When was a time when that happened (even if just a little)?**

**Student:** Well, my mom doesn't bug me about my bedroom anymore. The only thing is, I have to clean it on Saturdays before I can call or see my friends.

**Parent:** She's right. I have given up the daily battles about her room. School is so important though. I wish I could trust that she was being more responsible about her homework.

**How did you get that to happen?**

**Student:** I've been cleaning my room without having to be told to on Saturdays. It's working pretty good. If I have something "big" to do on Saturdays I try to keep my room half-way decent so it doesn't take me too long.

**Parent:** I'm getting more comfortable with just checking her room on Saturdays and not worrying about it all week. Maybe I could do a similar thing with homework, on a daily basis though. Instead of me reminding her all night to start her homework, perhaps we can say no phone calls or socializing until I see that her homework is done.

**What will you do to get that to happen more?**

**Student:** (After some assistance from the counselor) I will be doing my homework right after school and showing it to my mom.

**Parent:** I'll be monitoring the phone calls until homework is checked and then not imposing any restrictions the rest of the evening.

## Team Meetings and Team Planning Conferences

A precursor to the numerous team meetings and team planning conferences held today was the Advisory Councils that were started in Vienna by Adler early in the twentieth century. In 1931 Adler (1931/1992) wrote:

> It was the aim of reaching teachers and establishing a programme of school counselling services that I started to develop, some fifteen years ago, the Advisory Councils in Individual Psychology that have proved so valuable in Vienna and in many other cities in Europe...In the procedure established by the Advisory Council, a well-trained psychologist who is experienced in the problems faced by teachers, parents and children joins with the teachers of a school and discusses with them the problems that have arisen in their work...Because they are experienced, they soon agree on a solution. (p. 153)

Just as today many educators realize the benefits of assessing the difficulties of students in a team format, Adler (1931/1992) wrote about the benefits of the Advisory Council:

> All the teachers I have trained in this work are happy in it and would not give it up on any account. It makes their whole contact with their work more interesting and all their efforts more successful. None of them feels it is an added burden, for often in half an hour or less they can solve a problem that would have dogged them for years. The spirit of cooperation in the whole school is heightened and, after a short time, there are no more major problems and only minor ones are referred for treatment. (p. 154)

On the team meeting outline that follows, a solution-focused/Adlerian approach is presented to use in team formats. Just as Adler included the child in the meetings, we encourage counselors to include the student where it appears to be in the best interest of the student. The meeting is broken down into five steps. At each step there are specific instructions for those times when the student is present.

The type of form used can set the tone for the meetings. Forms that bring out the students' deficiencies will be apt to create a negative atmosphere, while those forms that stress the students' strengths will encourage the students and their parents. We encourage members of teams to revise the forms that their teams use according to the guidelines below. We realize that special education forms such as those for the Individual Education Plan (IEP) often are regulated by the state and laws beyond the school district. Nonetheless, districts are encouraged to revise their forms within the legal parameters so that:

a) items are written in solution-focused terms (i.e., The student needs to continue to___.)

b) responses can be written in solution-oriented language (i.e., On a scale of 1= completely unskilled to 10 = completely skilled, indicate the student's level of functioning.)

c) questions capitalize on the student's assets (i.e., What are the student's strengths?)

We were involved in an Individual Education Plan meeting for a middle school-aged student who was in a learning support class. She did exceptionally well in Math but was struggling in Science and Social Studies. Through a discussion we discovered that the key to her success in Math was that she did approximately 20 minutes of practice each evening. The assignments were always clearly defined (e.g., "For homework do 1-20 on page 220"). In Science and Social Studies homework assignments were not so well defined. The students were expected to reread on their own what they covered in class. Occasionally the teachers assigned vocabulary and end-of-the-chapter review questions. Knowing that daily practice was a key for the student, the learning support teacher, together with the Science and Social Studies teachers, made daily concrete assignments for the student. The student raised her Science grade one letter grade and her Social Studies two letter grades in one marking period.

## Solution-Focused/Adlerian Parenting Course

| **Adlerian Model** | **Solution-Focused/Adlerian Model** |
|---|---|
| Selection<br>Session One | Selection<br>Session One |
| • Introductory activity | • Introductory activity (that encourages involvement and linking) |
| • A discussion of why they are there | • What they would like to change or do more of |
| • A sharing of how they have been raised | • What they saw their parents do that they want to do (Counselor listens for beliefs.) |
| • Teaching and practicing a skill (e.g., goals of misbehavior) | • Teaching and practicing a skill (e.g., goals of misbehavior) |
| • Assignment to practice the skill | • Encouragement and assignment of task: "Notice this week those things that you do that you would like to make happen more in terms of encouraging positive behavior in your children." |
| Sessions Two - Seven | Session Two |
| • Review of previously learned skill | • Sharing what they noticed that week that they'd like to continue |
| • Sharing and reviewing of homework | • Coming up with a process goal through hypothetical questioning |
| • Teaching and practicing of new skills (e.g., active listening, "I-messages," consequences) | • Teaching and practicing of new skills (e.g., active listening, "I-messages," consequences) |
| • Encouragement and assignment regarding the new skill and their goal | • Encouragement and assignment regarding the new skill and their goal |
|  | Sessions Three - Seven |
|  | • Sharing of their progress toward their goal (looking for exceptions, creating solutions, and overcoming obstacles) |
|  | • Some examples of keys: doing something different (listening more, being consistent); 180 turn (being proactive instead of reactive) |
|  | • Encouragement and assignment regarding their goal |
| Session Eight | Session Eight |
| • Review of their skills and their progress | • Review of the solutions they have found and how they can continue to amplify them |
| • Celebration | • Celebration |

*Table 08-01.*

## Conclusion

Consultation is a time-effective means for counselors to handle their large caseloads. Since in consultation counselors work with the parents and teachers of the children on their caseloads, consultation is considered to be an indirect responsive service. Consultation takes place in dyads, triads, or in small groups such as parenting groups or team meetings. The integration of solution-focused and Adlerian techniques creates a positive model for change through the consultation process. In many cases, it is the consultees who must change in order to effect change in the children with whom they live or work. A positive outcome is that consultation is an educational process for the consultee, who can then apply the skills learned to other children, settings, and situations.

## Solution-Focused/Adlerian Consultation Outline

(Chapter 8)

(An integration of solution-focused techniques and Kern and Mullis' [1993] Adlerian model).

1. **Structure the interview by:**
   - A. stating the amount of time alloted for the interview.
   - B. naming the student to be discussed.

2. **Help the consultee identify what the consultee would like to change or do differently by:**
   - A. asking the consultee, "What would you like to change or do differently?"
     (The consultee is likely to describe the student's misbehavior. Minimize complaints and emphasize what the consultee would like to do differently in order to effect change in the student.)
   - B. listening for the consultee's use of absolutes, labels, and beliefs about the student by asking:
     - "How does the student respond to corrective efforts?"
     - "How does the student interact with other children?"
     - "What are the student's strengths and weaknesses?"

   If consultees are having difficulty responding, ask the following metaphor:
     - "If you compared this child to an animal, what would the animal be?"

3. **Assist the consultee in identifying a process goal by:**
   - A. asking the consultee the goal of the student's misbehavior (an understanding of the goal helps the consultee determine the action to take.)
   - B. helping the consultee identify a process goal: "I will be... (+ action verb)."
   - C. asking the consultee on a scale of one to ten where he or she is now.

4. **Help the consultee build on strengths to make changes by :**
   - A. asking the consultee about the times when the change happened just a little.
   - B. brainstorming alternative solutions with the consultee based on the exceptions (times when the consultee made change happen just a little) and the consultee's strengths.
   - C. helping the consultee decide on a solution.

5. **Close the interview and follow-up by:**
   - A. summarizing, closing the interview, and scheduling additional meetings if necessary.
   - B. encouraging the consultee during the consultation period.
   - C. helping the consultee address possible obstacles.

## Conference with Student and Teacher

(Counselor completes form and gives copies to each participant afterward)

Student ______________________________ Date __________

Teacher ______________________________

What would you like to see change in the classroom?
(listening for beliefs)

Student:

Teacher:

When was a time that the change did happen (even if just a little)?
(recognizing exceptions)

Student:

Teacher:

How did you get the change to happen?
(listening for the way each person approaches difficulties)

Student:

Teacher:

What will you be doing to make the change happen more often?
(formulating a process goal and solutions)

Student:

Teacher:

We will meet again to follow up on:

## Conference with Student and Parent

(Counselor completes form and gives copies to each participant afterward)

Student ______________________________ Date __________

Teacher ______________________________

What would you like to see change at home?
(listening for beliefs)

Student:

Parent:

When was a time that the change did happen (even if just a little)?
(recognizing exceptions)

Student:

Parent:

How did you get the change to happen?
(listening for the way each person approaches difficulties)

Student:

Parent:

What will you be doing to make the change happen more often?
(formulating a process goal and solutions)

Student:

Parent:

We will meet again to follow up on:

## Follow-up to Student - Teacher Conference

(Counselor completes form and gives copies to each participant afterward)

Student ______________________________ Date __________

Teacher ______________________________

What did you make happen that you would like to see happen more?

Student:

Teacher:

How did you get that to happen (even if just a little)?

Student:

Teacher:

On a scale of 1 to 10 where are you now?

Student:

Teacher:

What will you be doing to continue to make the change happen?

Student:

Teacher:

# Follow-up to Student - Parent Conference

(Counselor completes form and gives copies to each participant afterward)

Student ______________________________ Date __________

Teacher ______________________________

What did you make happen that you would like to see happen more?

Student:

Parent:

How did you get that to happen (even if just a little)?

Student:

Parent:

On a scale of 1 to 10 where are you now?

Student:

Parent:

What will you be doing to continue to make the change happen?

Student:

Parent:

# Team Meeting Outline

(*Indicates intervention when student is present)

Student ______________________ Teacher ______________________ Date__________

The members of the team establish why they are meeting.

- The team makes sure that the student understands that the meeting is positive (solution-focused) in nature.

**Team's purpose for meeting:**

The team members discuss what change they would like to see happen.

- Student has the opportunity to share what he or she would like to change.

Student:

Team:

The team members share times when they have seen the proposed change happen (even if only a little).

- The team members direct the feedback to the student.

Team:

The team members discuss what helped the student to get this to happen (including what the student did and what support facilitated it).

- The team members encourage the student to discuss how he or she got this to happen.

Student:

Team:

The team members determine what needs to be done to assist the student to do more of this.
A staff member is appointed to oversee the case.

- The team members encourage student input.

Student:

Team:

Follow-up date is established. Date __________ Time __________ Location ______________________

| Solution-focused counseling | Adlerian counseling |
|---|---|
| obstacles | "Crucial Cs" |
| solutions | logical consequences |
|  | natural consequences |

9 9
CHAPTER
9 9

# System Support

*At the final meeting of the school year, the school counseling advisory committee met to review the evaluations recently completed by students, teachers, administrators and staff. It had been four years since the committee was formed. The first two years were spent primarily in planning, with implementation of the comprehensive developmental program following. Initial training was also conducted during the second year of planning. The entire complement of school employees was involved in inservicing at various levels.*

*The evaluations were favorable. The committee attributed the response to the seamless implementation of the program, whose goal was to build on existing components in the schools. In addition, many of the activities were accommodated within the regular classroom and school procedures. The committee members realized that they were using a solution-focused approach because they built on the strengths that the program already possessed.*

*During the first year of implementation, all staff integrated solution-focused/Adlerian techniques into their existing team approach. Counselors began using these techniques in consultations, where they were able to model the approach for teachers, who later were able to use the skills in conferring with parents. A solution-focused/Adlerian approach to discipline based on the existing conflict resolution program was introduced across the district. Elementary counselors, who had regularly been conducting classroom guidance, rewrote their curriculum to emphasize social interest, while secondary counselors worked out scheduling difficulties during the first year prior to their implementation the second year.*

*In the second year, solution-focused/Adlerian groups were introduced by all counselors. In addition, the Adlerian-based parent education classes at the elementary and middle school levels were modified to include solution-focused techniques, and the classes were introduced at the high school.*

*The main area identified for additional change was the relationship between the school and community. Although the advisory council had representation from the community and significant efforts had been made to inform the community of the new comprehensive counseling program, the council agreed to target this area in their planning and implementation. Since respondents to the evaluations were accepting of the program thus far, the committee members felt that they could begin to expand beyond existing components and introduce new elements.*

# Introduction

Creating system support is essential for the successful implementation of a comprehensive developmental school counseling program. System support consists of a variety of support services that are necessary in order for the other school counseling processes to be effective (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994). Generally, these activities support research and development, staff/community public relations, professional development, committee/advisory boards, community outreach, and program management and operations. Examples of system support include:

Research and Development
- Program evaluation
- Pilot projects
- Follow-up studies
- Maintenance and upgrading of counseling curriculum

Staff/Community Public Relations
- Orienting the staff and community to the new comprehensive counseling program
- Newsletters
- Media announcements
- Public presentations
- Open houses
- Parent informational meetings
- School-wide events

Professional Development
- Inservice training
- Teacher effectiveness training support groups
- Professional conferences and meetings
- Completing university course work
- Contributing to the professional literature
- Supervising interns

Committee/Advisory Boards
- Serving on the school counseling advisory committee
- Serving on the school curriculum committee
- Serving on community committees

Community Outreach
- Partnerships between businesses and the school
- Activities designed to help school employees learn about community resources
- Efforts to maximize students' opportunities for work
- Coordinating volunteering and tutoring with community assistance

Program Management and Operations
- Strategic planning
- Development of policies that guide the delivery of services
- Planning and management tasks
- Monthly reports
- Planning and training for school-wide programs (i.e., conflict resolution, disciplinary)
- Faculty meetings

# System Support Using the "Crucial Cs"

As described in Chapter Five, students need the "Crucial Cs" (Bettner & Lew, 1995, 1996a) to successfully meet life's challenges. Likewise, school personnel function at their optimal level when they feel connected, capable, that they count, and that they have courage. Helping school personnel attain the "Crucial Cs" as related to their positions is an important function of system support. It is an interdependent process—those activities that help create system support, involving the entire staff at all levels in trainings, can also assist school personnel to experience connection, capability, feeling counted, and courage.

## *Connection*

School personnel who feel a sense of connection with their school feel secure, reach out more readily to others, and develop relationships with other staff members. When individuals feel connected to their school, they have a sense of ownership and want to cooperate with others. It can be very gratifying for a paraprofessional, a recess aide for example, who is invited to join the counselors and teachers in a conflict resolution training. The message that the recess aide receives is, "We all are working together to maintain a cooperative atmosphere in the school." The cooperative atmosphere is on two levels: among students and among school personnel. Since it is a goal for everyone involved in the schools to be talking in solution-oriented language, the teachers, administrators, and staff are all connected by a common language. Eventually the parents, too, will be connected through the language when they hear it spoken in parent conferences, parent education meetings, and consultations. This connection is further established through many of the public relation endeavors that are so important to system support. Newsletters, public presentations, and open houses are just a few examples. Strong connections are made among individuals who serve on the numerous committees and advisory boards. As mentioned in the discussion on the school counseling advisory committee (Chapter Two), an ideal way to appease an adversarial parent is to include the parent on the committee. When the parent feels part of the committee he or she more readily cooperates.

Other connections are made through partnerships between businesses and a school district and community organizations and a school district. Tutoring and volunteering help parents feel a part of the school, just as those activities serve as a bridge between the school and senior citizens, who have not had children in the schools for decades.

Within the school district, faculty, administrators, staff, and students feel connected by school-wide events such as "Human Understanding Week" where individuals within the entire district come together to celebrate an occasion. Also policies, such as a standard discipline policy K-12 can create a sense of consistency and connectedness.

In districts where faculty and staff are encouraged to use professional development opportunities, individuals feel united through faculty meetings, inservice training, and teacher support groups. Individuals experience a connection beyond their districts to other professionals in their discipline through: professional conferences and meetings, contributing to the professional literature, and partnerships with universities such as in the supervision of interns.

Program evaluation is a viable mechanism for providing feedback by constituents of a school district. In sending evaluations to faculty, administrators, staff, students, parents, and community members, it conveys to them the message that they belong to the district and that they have a say in their district.

## Capability

Ansbacher and Ansbacher (1956) spoke of individuals struggling to overcome inferior feelings. The inferior feelings may either challenge individuals to develop their capabilities in useful ways or discourage them in developing responsibility and social interest. Bettner and Lew (1995, 1996a) report that children who feel capable also feel competent, self-reliant, have self-discipline, and are responsible. Likewise, school personnel who feel capable will also demonstrate these qualities. Those who do not feel capable are likely to feel inadequate, may be dependent on others, and may seek power by controlling others. Perhaps it is out of a feeling of inadequacy that some teachers yell at students and handle discipline both ineffectively and inconsistently. School personnel come into the schools with various levels of training in discipline procedures. This discrepancy can be ameliorated by a school-wide discipline policy and the appropriate training for school personnel. Creating consistency is not only helpful for the faculty and staff, but the students will benefit the most. For those school personnel who need additional support in this area, support groups, such as teacher effectiveness training groups, are helpful. With training and support they can feel competent and self-disciplined.

School personnel can also feel competent in a school district that supports them in professional development activities such as professional meetings and conferences. Through workshops they can learn skills that will help them feel capable and more able to serve their students.

Evaluations written in solution-focused terms (as illustrated in Chapter Two) can offer school personnel feedback to reinforce their strengths and acknowledge their capabilities. The evaluations can be designed to allow school personnel to develop process goals in those areas where improvement is needed.

## Feeling Counted

School personnel want to feel that their presence in the school counts. They want to feel valued, that they make a difference, and that they are making a contribution. Those school personnel who do not believe they count often feel insignificant. They may feel insignificant when they are not listened to, when policies are always made on a "top-down" basis, and when their strengths and qualifications go unrecognized. When children feel insignificant and hurt, they may seek revenge for their hurt feelings (Bettner & Lew, 1995, 1996a). Similarly, adults may seek revenge, although their methods may look different. Examples may include staff members who "bad mouth" the district, who are "dead weight" on the staff, and who fail to volunteer for anything above and beyond their contracted duties.

The type of leadership that a school district has can greatly affect whether or not the school personnel feel that they count. Administrators can help other school personnel feel that they count by eliciting their suggestions and input in policy making. Districts that use committees and boards, which are usually shared leadership, offer individuals the opportunity to make a difference in the school.

Accountability, although looked upon negatively by some school counselors, can actually help administrators and other school personnel realize how essential counselors are in the school district. Although it is time-consuming for counselors to keep the necessary records to measure program outcomes, those who invest their energies in doing it find that the resulting reports concretely demonstrate that their presence in the school truly counts. Accountability includes such activities as doing monthly reports and program evaluations. According to Gysbers and Henderson (1994), "It is by demonstrating our contribution to students' growth and development that our position in the educational setting is assured" (p. 117).

### Courage

Making the necessary changes to implement a comprehensive developmental counseling program takes courage. It is much easier to maintain the status-quo rather than to engage in the risk-taking behavior necessary to effect change. School personnel who have courage feel equal, confident, and hopeful. They are able to face the challenges involved in implementing and maintaining a program of this magnitude. The challenges are less when the school personnel possess the other "Crucial Cs." If individuals feel connected, capable, and that they count, introducing change will not be as difficult.

School personnel who are courageous will engage in research to find programs that can better serve their students, by reading professional journals and attending conferences to keep abreast of successful programs for possible implementation. In addition, school personnel need to conduct pilot projects to ensure success before making wide-spread changes. We recommend that school districts create a partnership with a university for assistance in the research, including follow-up studies.

Courageous school personnel are more inclined to announce, with proper planning, new programs through presentations, newsletters, the media, and open houses. They reach out to the community and create partnerships with businesses and community resources. They solicit and train volunteers to work with the students. Central to all of their programming and policy making will be the best interest of the students.

### Summary

When school personnel experience the "Crucial Cs" they will be proficient in "moving to educational practices designed to empower rather than to overpower students" (Nicoll, 1996, p. 138). Nicoll's definition of empowerment closely parallels Bettner and Lew's (1995, 1996a) "Crucial Cs":

> An empowered individual feels connected to others, a sense of belonging, acceptance, and value as an equal and competent individual. The empowered person feels confident in his or her abilities; that one's abilities and talents are recognized and appreciated by others. Mutual respect and comfort in both seeking assistance and working cooperatively enable one to take responsibility for his or her own life and foster a sense of personal courage for undertaking the solution of life's tasks in a socially useful manner. (p. 138)

Nicoll continues that school personnel cannot help students function effectively if the school personnel themselves are working in "a system of static, externally imposed standards, structures, and curricular requirements. All children and teachers must experience school as a dynamic, caring community focused on encouraging and empowering all who inhabit it to reach their maximum human potential" (p. 138).

## Examples of Programs Providing System Support

### A School-Wide Discipline Program

School-wide programs allow school personnel and students in a school, and within a district to feel connected to each other. In a school that has a well-implemented discipline program, everyone knows what is expected. Individuals can feel safe and secure in such an environment. School-wide programs create opportunities for faculty, administrators, and staff members to work together. One example of a school-wide effort is for schools and districts to adopt one discipline program across the board. They may choose to adapt the procedures to meet the developmental needs of children at any given age, but the underlying philosophy remains the same.

There are several Adlerian-based discipline programs on the market such as Cooperative Discipline (Albert, 1996) and Positive Discipline in the Classroom (Nelsen et al., 1997) that provide a democratic approach to discipline as advocated by Nicoll (1996). Albert (1996), for example, describes a democratic approach as a "hands-joined" approach. She contrasts it to a "hands-on" approach which refers to an autocratic method, and a "hands-off" approach which is laissez-faire. The Adlerian-based programs offer strategies for building and maintaining discipline based on cooperation. The strategies emphasize encouragement and help students take responsibility for their behavior.

Nelsen (1996, 1997) advocates that school personnel focus on solutions instead of consequences. According to her, many individuals try to disguise punishment by calling it consequences. If the "consequence" focuses on the past and makes children pay for their mistakes, then it is actually "punishment." Nelsen states that logical consequences can be effective when properly understood and appropriately used. She teaches the "Three Rs and an H for Solutions"—Related, Respectful, Reasonable, and Helpful. The student or students involved should be allowed to brainstorm solutions to the difficulty and choose the solution he or she thinks will help most. When the difficulty impacts on the classroom, solutions can be brainstormed in the context of a class meeting. Nelsen states that a vote should be taken only if the problem involves the whole class. We include one more guideline, which comes from solution-focused theory: we encourage the teacher or counselor to help the student choose a solution based on the child's strengths. This is accomplished by helping the student look for exceptions, or times when he or she was able to handle the situation. In the event that a group of students needs a solution, the group needs to discover its strengths. The group members need to discuss how they were able to handle similar situations in the past, or times when they kept the situation from occurring.

Selecting a Discipline Program. Choosing a discipline program for implementation on a school or district-wide level is a crucial activity. To ensure success in the process, a committee that accurately represents the school should be involved. A subcommittee of the school advisory committee could serve as the core of the group with participation by administrators, teachers, staff members, parents, and students. The committee needs to research and review the programs that are available and take into consideration such things as the philosophy of the program, the ease of implementation, cost, and available training. The program should complement and allow for regular classroom meetings (discussed in Chapter Three). Once the decision is made, all school personnel should be trained in the program.

## *Training and Support for School Personnel*

On-going training and support help ensure the success of adopting a new program. Often new programs are added to schools, only to die out because they are not nurtured or followed-up. At the time that the committee adopts a program and arranges for the training, the committee should plan for the on-going training, which may be provided by the publishing company or by the counseling staff. Many individuals appreciate the opportunity to share successes as well as difficulties they experience with the new program.

Even after the initial phase of a new program, school counselors may want to provide training and support for school personnel as a part of system support. Counselors may choose to use an educational program such as Teacher Effectiveness Training (Dinkmeyer et al., 1980), which is based on Adlerian concepts, or provide more of a support group. As an elementary counselor, I (LaFountain) co-led a stress management group for teachers. The attendance was low, and I am left wondering if we would have had a better response if we had used a more positive name such as a "solutions group." We encourage counselors to run "solutions groups" similar to the one outlined in Chapter Seven.

## *Setting Process Goals as a Result of Research Studies*

Pilot studies which involve a small sample of the students are an ideal way to introduce a new program into a school. Prior to setting up the pilot study, school personnel should establish process goals to provide direction in the project. Results should be analyzed and the benefits weighed before a decision is made to implement the new project on a larger scale. Again, process goals regarding the implementation schedule should be established. Follow-up studies are always encouraged to monitor the program. Educational departments at universities are usually eager to work with local school districts in these research endeavors.

We recently trained some Student Assistance Program counselors who were planning to use solution-focused groups as an alternative to suspending students who were caught with tobacco in their possession on school property. Nelsen (1996), as described earlier, might applaud these counselors' efforts to offer adolescents "solutions" as opposed to a "punishment" which the district might be attempting to call a "logical consequence." The expectation was that in the solution groups, each student would set an individual goal that would assist them in not bringing tobacco onto the campus. The counselors shared that many of their process goals would most likely directly address the tobacco such as: "I will be checking my pockets before I leave for school to make sure I do not have any cigarettes on me." We reminded them of the importance of listening to the students' beliefs and helping them form process goals based on their beliefs and in terms of their strengths. We suggested that many of the students, at least initially, became involved in smoking due to social needs and that those students may need to explore those beliefs. Although the counselors agreed, they stated that their directive was to offer these students a means to be successful in coming to school tobacco-free so that they would not be suspended from school and that they could take advantage of learning opportunities. It is clear from the directive, that the goal is to reduce the number of students who are suspended due to possessing tobacco on school property. A counselor establishing such a group could set the following process goal (which sounds much like a research hypothesis): "I will be setting up a pilot program to determine if solution-focused groups are a viable alternative to suspension from school in deterring students from bringing tobacco products to school."

We encourage counselors to follow sound research practices in their pilot studies. Sound research procedures involve: gaining permission of the school board and/or administration as necessary; gaining student and parental consent (according to school board policy); and including enough students in the study to make the numbers meaningful. For experimental or quasi-experimental research, a minimum of fifteen students in each group is required. Randomization is ideal—but we realize it is not always feasible in the school setting due to practical concerns such as the need for consent. Ideally in this scenario, the counselor will randomly select at least fifteen students for each of the two conditions: participation in the solution-focused groups or suspension. The counselor will run groups for those selected for the groups, and the administration will impose suspension for those selected for that condition. Someone other than the counselor should keep records on those students who violate the tobacco policy. At the end of the prescribed time, counselors will analyze the number of incidences that students in each of the treatment groups are caught with tobacco. Based on this procedure, the counselor who runs this pilot project can establish the following process goals:

1) "I will be setting up the treatment groups by randomly selecting, from those students caught with tobacco on campus, 15 students for the solution-focused groups and 15 students for the suspension condition."
2) "I will be running solution-focused groups for eight weeks."
3) "I will be analyzing the results of the pilot study, sharing them, and making recommendations."

In the event that the results are promising, the counselor should go through the same procedure to establish process goals for implementing the new program on a larger scale and following up on the project.

## Solution-Focused Supervision of Interns

Throughout the book we have encouraged partnerships with universities, with assistance in research being one of the major benefits to schools. On the other hand, schools can greatly help out universities by providing a setting for their research, and training of their interns (including school counselors, student teachers, and administrative interns). This discussion involves the supervision of school counseling interns, but many of the concepts are applicable to supervising student teachers and other interns as well.

Providing supervision is very similar to the consultation process, although in consultation the relationship between the consultant and consultee is an equal one in terms of power. In supervision, however, the supervisor is usually required to grade the intern, which puts the supervisor in an evaluative position. Even with this power differential, the relationship can be one of mutual respect. The stages in solution-focused supervision are applied much like they are in consulting and counseling. The stages are listed below along with a brief discussion of a supervision that I (LaFountain) experienced.

I was supervising a counseling student who was doing the first of three intern experiences in a school. She was working at a middle school and feeling very successful with most of the students she counseled (mostly girls who were having either friend or school problems). She began to lose confidence when an eighth grade boy was referred to her for behavioral problems in class. In the first counseling session, he readily blamed everyone else and had little interest in receiving counseling.

In the first stage, the supervisee identifies what he or she would like to change or do differently while the supervisor listens for the language the supervisee uses, the supervisee's beliefs, and any exceptions that the supervisee shares. The intern stated that she would like to be more confident when working with "impossible" cases. I reframed what she said, and asked her what made it so "difficult" to work with this boy. She shared that all of the other students had liked her and she did not realize why this boy did not. She stated that she understood why the referring teacher was having trouble with him because he just sat there and would not say much except to blame everyone else. She said she felt ashamed because she ended up lecturing him and telling him what to do since he would not open up. She admitted that she felt pressured to get him to make some immediate changes because she wanted the teacher to think she was doing a good job. From her perception she felt that the more she tried, the more he resisted. It became clear that she wanted to be the students' friend and that she wanted to please the teachers as well.

In order to identify an exception, I asked her to reflect on what she did with the other students with whom she felt successful. She stated that she listened to them and reflected their feelings. She immediately realized that she needed to listen to the boy more, and not be so quick to "fix" him and please the teacher. I asked her to notice those things that she would like to see happen more in the upcoming week.

When we met a week later, she shared that the session with the boy went better because she took the time to listen to him and not worry so much about the teacher. She identified that listening more was what she would like to make happen more, and she realized that being able to do that was a sign of confidence. She did have a concern, though, that by listening to the boy, she encouraged his blaming of the teacher. I used a hypothetical question and asked her, "If you woke up tomorrow and you were a master counselor, how would you handle this boy?" She said she would discover a way to get him to "see the light." We discussed that miracles do not actually happen, but I pointed out a solution-focused technique which might help him to "see the light." I encouraged her to ask him, "What can you do to get the teacher off your back?" At first the supervisee was concerned that it would look like she was siding with the student and giving him the wrong message that the teacher was being unreasonable. I reminded her that those things that would get the teacher off his back (i.e., his listening in class, participation in class, and keeping his hands to himself) would be exactly what the teacher would want him to do. Even if initially it appears as if the intern is siding with the student, the ultimate behavior change would be exactly what would make the student successful in the classroom.

I then encouraged the supervisee to set a process goal, preferably built upon a strength she has already demonstrated. Her goal was: "I will be reminding myself to listen to students and begin to help them from the point at which they are ready to begin."

In summary, the steps I used with this supervisee were identical to the steps used for other solution-focused interventions, reinforcing the notion that through a solution-focused perspective, school personnel can handle a variety situations with a single approach.

## Guidelines for Implementing "A School with Solutions"

Clark (1995) discusses the results of an evaluation of a social interest program that was implemented in a school district in which he worked. Although the program was not a comprehensive developmental program, such as this proposed one, the two programs share many goals. In sharing the results of the program's evaluation, Clark offers many guidelines that are applicable to a solution-focused/Adlerian comprehensive developmental school counseling program as well. These guidelines, which follow, are actually solutions or "keys" which can be generalized to other contexts:

1. The committee needs to start with a dedicated core group who are committed to developing and implementing the program.
2. The committee needs to build on activities that already exist in the districts. This helps staff members in the acceptance of new programs.
3. The committee needs to first implement those components of the program that can be easily integrated into existing curriculum.
4. The committee needs to conduct an assessment of staff members' interest in training to help determine those staff members who are likely to become involved in the program. Also, by reading through the assessment instrument, staff members gain a clearer understanding of the program.
5. The committee can easily facilitate staff training through components that are already in existence because staff members have the opportunity to observe and learn first-hand.
6. Program evaluation is essential. The committee may need to consult with others who can help them to develop an appropriate evaluation instrument.
7. Committee members need to keep costs for program development to a minimum, which in turn helps gain support.

Clark (1995) reports the obstacles that his program encountered below. We have rewritten each of the obstacles as solutions:

1. Obstacle: The tendency for some of the committee members to divert their interest to other programs.

   Solution: To set up the committee with staggered terms for its members. With established terms, members are more likely to stay involved within their committed time, and staggered terms will ensure continuity.
2. Obstacle: The name of the program failed to reflect the central purpose of the program.

   Solution: To invest the time to choose a name that reflects the central purpose of the program.

3. Obstacle: Failure to measure what the program's initial objectives were.

   Solution: To identify clear goals and objectives of the program, identify those to be initially evaluated, and develop an evaluation instrument.

4. Obstacle: Although the administration supported the program, it was not involved in the development and ownership of the program.

   Solution: To involve the administration in the development and ownership of the program. Although all the administrators are not able to divert their time to this committee, sound representation is needed on the school counseling advisory committee.

5. Obstacle: Parents, students, and community organizations were not actively involved in the program development. Parent and community organizations only heard presentations on the program. Students were recipients of the program but were not involved in the program development.

   Solution: To involve these groups in the development of the program and to have representation from these groups on the school advisory council.

## "A School with Solutions"

Chapter Two establishes the initial guidelines for creating "A School with Solutions" through the implementation of a comprehensive developmental counseling program. The process needs to be nurtured and maintained through regular meetings, in which all levels of school personnel discuss what they are already doing that is solution-focused/Adlerian within a comprehensive developmental counseling program. Checklists to facilitate this process are found at the end of the chapters on: Curriculum (Chapter Three), Individual Planning (Chapter Five), Responsive Services (Chapter Six), and System Support (Chapter Nine). On the checklists the participants can write process goals in their development as "A School with Solutions." A powerful activity to facilitate them in the process is the activity entitled, See Your School as "A School with Solutions," found at the end of this chapter.

## Conclusion

System support consists of a variety of support services that are essential for the successful implementation of a comprehensive developmental counseling program. These activities support research and development, staff/community public relations, professional development, committee/advisory boards, community outreach, and program management and operations. An important function of system support is helping school personnel attain the "Crucial Cs." Activities that promote system support assist school personnel in experiencing connection, capability, feeling counted, and courage simultaneously.

School-wide programs, such as the disciplinary program described, help school personnel and students feel connected. School-wide programs create opportunities for teachers, administrators, and staff members to cooperatively work on a common goal. The importance of researching the efficacy of new programs is explained along with a means of establishing research goals through process goal setting. An illustration of a solution-focused supervision case reinforces the idea that many difficulties can be addressed through this single approach.

The results of an evaluation of a social interest program provide guidelines that are applicable to a solution-focused/Adlerian comprehensive developmental school counseling program. Through the implementation of a comprehensive developmental school counseling program, school personnel begin to establish "A School with Solutions." This procedure is facilitated through checklists that encourage the writing of process goals, and an activity that allows school personnel to see their school as "A School with Solutions."

## What We Are Already Doing That Is Solution-Focused/Adlerian System Support Component

1. **Check which activities:**
   - A. **you are already doing.**
   - B. **you are doing in a solution-focused way.**
   - C. **you are doing in an Adlerian way.**
2. **Brainstorm ways to adapt the activities to a solution-focused/Adlerian model.**

| **Activity** Currently doing and would like to continue to do | Activity is | | To adapt it to a Solution-Focused/ Adlerian model we will be... |
|---|---|---|---|
| | SF | AD | |
| Program evaluation | | | |
| Setting process goals as a result of pilot studies and follow-up studies | | | |
| Maintaining and upgrading counseling curriculum | | | |
| Orienting staff and community members to the comprehensive counseling program | | | |
| Newsletters | | | |
| Media announcements | | | |
| Public presentations | | | |
| Open houses | | | |
| Parent informational meetings | | | |
| School-wide events | | | |
| Inservice training | | | |
| Teacher effectiveness training support groups | | | |
| Professional conferences and meetings | | | |
| Supporting school personnel in university course work | | | |
| Supporting school personnel to contribute to professional literature | | | |

**SF = Solution-Focused AD = Adlerian**

# What We Are Already Doing That Is Solution-Focused/Adlerian System Support Component

1. **Check which activities:**
   - **A. you are already doing.**
   - **B. you are doing in a solution-focused way.**
   - **C. you are doing in an Adlerian way.**
2. **Brainstorm ways to adapt the activities to a solution-focused/Adlerian model.**

| **Activity** Currently doing and would like to continue to do | Activity is | | To adapt it to a Solution-Focused/ Adlerian model we will be... |
|---|---|---|---|
| | SF | AD | |
| Supervising interns | | | |
| Serving on the school counseling advisory committee | | | |
| Serving on school committees | | | |
| Serving on community committees | | | |
| Partnerships between businesses and the school | | | |
| Helping school employees learn about community resources | | | |
| Providing opportunities for students to work | | | |
| Coordinating volunteering and tutoring assistance | | | |
| Strategic planning | | | |
| Developing policies that guide the delivery of services | | | |
| Planning and management tasks | | | |
| Monthly reports | | | |
| Planning and training for school wide programs | | | |
| Faculty meetings | | | |

**SF = Solution-Focused AD = Adlerian**

## See Your School as "A School with Solutions"

1. When you regard your school as one with solutions (as opposed to problems) what images does that give you?

2. In your image what are the school personnel doing?

3. When have the school personnel done that?

4. How did the school personnel do that?

5. How could the school personnel do that more?

6. What would they need to do to start what is described in number 5?

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